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THE CAMP ON THE MAINE COAST

JOHN SHERWOOD, IRONMASTER

BY

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IN MEMORIAM

RICHARD WATSON GILDER

Men must endure
Their going hence, even as their coming hither;
Ripeness is all.

—Lear.

JOHN SHERWOOD, IRONMASTER

A STUDY of the mental and moral characteristics of children as altered, lost or valuably developed later in life would, I think, be interesting. Especially would this apply to the receptive and inventive imagination so often found in children and so often to all appearance lost as time affords material contradictions to the day dreams of the years of awakening intelligence.

This quality which makes children wordless poets and is of the heaven which lies about us in our infancy may usefully reappear in manhood as an essential, not only of the poet but of the man of science and the inventor. In midlife it may ripen anew into forms of product which have something of the joyous freedom, the self-born beliefs, which are the prerogatives of that king of faeryland, the child.

JOHN SHERWOOD, IRONMASTER

I

MY father was killed in battle with the Sioux and three months later my birth cost my mother an illness which, during my third year, ended her life. There was very little available property. Certain wild lands in Maine only productive of taxes were my sole inheritance. My two uncles, elder brothers of my mother, found their bachelor lives charged with the embarrassment of an infant. Even my birth must have been an unusual event in the family, for it was long since such an occurrence—and now the baby no one wanted was an orphan and to be considered. The two men who decided my early fate were long afterwards described by my cousin, Dr. Harry Heath, as born aged and as having from childhood some of the mental and moral peculiarities of advanced life. I have never seen children like those relatives of mine and I am not quite sure that I understood what he meant, but certainly from my first remembrance of my uncles, they changed very little in body or mind and were generally regarded as somewhat eccentric persons. Although Richard

and Robert were twins, they were singularly unlike in outward appearance. Both were slightly under middle size, but while Robert was stout, ruddy, and had dark hair and the side whiskers then known as mutton chop, his brother was thin, pale and even ascetic in appearance and, as I first recall him, a man quite bald and clean shaven. The resemblance so common in twins, so entirely absent in the case of my uncles, was almost unnaturally complete in their mental and moral characteristics. Indeed so much alike were they that it was easy to predict what one would say from knowing what the other had said. Both were sparing of words and yet more sparing of money. Inheriting a secure, long-held, family business, they conducted it on conservative lines with some business talent, but without business genius.

I am fond of quoting my cousin, Dr. Heath, perhaps because he not only said unusual things, but because they were apt to set me upon untrodden paths of thought.

Once when we were young men, each doing his life work with every faculty in energetic service, he said, "John, that was an odd thing Euphemia said last night. You know she never abuses people, even our uncles, although she loathes them with good reason. When I had spoken of something unpleasant they had agreed upon as my mother's trustees, Euphemia said, 'They are as much alike as two peas, and two very dried-up peas at that.'

"I said, 'Cousin, no two peas are unmistakably the same.' Euphemia retorted, 'I said alike, not the same.' I owned to defeat, which pleased the dear woman. In fact, those two old men are, in mind, enough alike to encourage disbelief in the one law without exception, the law of absolute individuality."

I liked this for I knew very well that although two machines may be, as concerns construction and material, to all appearances identical, they never prove in their working to have the same capacity or length of usefulness.

Those two human machines, my uncles, were at one as concerned that infant, me, and my disposal.

The third human providence in my helpless life was this remote cousin, Euphemia Swanwick, of whom I shall have much to say. She had from time to time uncertain theoretical views concerning the management of my changing child life. Her fortunate incapacity to carry out her theories was due to two other interfering providences, my cousin's black servants, to whose experienced knowledge of the wants and needs of infants I owed much of the health and happiness of these early years.

Euphemia was a personage of such dignified behavior that to see her with abruptness begin to mimic people she disliked was at times startling even to those who knew her well. She had in fact a talent for mimicry which her good manners usually kept in the social background. I mention it here because it was incidentally the means of my knowing

something of the way in which I was placed in her care.

When I was some twenty years old and Euphemia had acquired an intimacy with me she never won in my infancy, a question of mine brought out one of these exhibitions of hostile mimicry which left with me a contributed memory of a time of life of which I could otherwise have had no knowledge and which may serve here as an introduction to my own account of John Sherwood.

"John, your Uncle Richard's supply of words was as nearly dried up then as now. By and by he will use only signs." Then she hunched up her large shoulders, stooped, and said, "That is Dick. Robert is inconceivable and," with a laugh, "inimitable. They came together to my little house and I knew you were the subject to be considered. This was when your mother was not yet buried." Here again was the queer presentation of Uncle Dick. I laughed out my applause of what was a wonderful rendering, " 'Euphemia, you are to take that baby.'

'We so concluded,' said Robert.

'You will have an increase of the regular check.'

'An increase,' said Robert.

'Am I to do as I please with the baby?'

'No, do as we please. We will send you a statement of what we wish done.'

'And not done,' said Robert.

'Yes,' said Richard, 'not done.'

" 'Thank you, brothers.' "

"And was that really all?" I asked.

"Yes, that was all, and that was the simple ceremony by which I acquired you. My butcher could not have left me a leg of mutton with more indifference. Oh, John, I hated you and them. Dick is mean but Robert is a spendthrift of meanness. He looks—he watches for chances like a cat at a mousehole." And indeed, as concerned my uncles, she had reason enough for her dislike.

The family council thus resulted in their turning for aid to my Cousin Euphemia, then a maiden lady under thirty. This was of necessity rather than of choice. They were of middle age and lived very isolated lives in an old home high above the Schuylkill beyond the village of Manayunk and a mile or so from the family possession, certain moderately productive iron works conducted, as I have said, in a very conservative way, making small profits which they put away in safe bonds or permanent ground rents. This easily won competence brought them no luxuries except the privilege of undisturbed habits of precise and punctual lives which they were without desire to have troubled by the intrusion of obvious duties.

I learned later that they had been reluctant to hand me over to Euphemia. In early womanhood she had shocked the old society of Philadelphia by becoming a Roman Catholic and had broken off a match with an army officer because she declined to marry unless he accepted the conditions her church imposed. She

had lived ever since on the small income my uncles allowed her. This was now to be increased, but not largely, and I was consigned to her care with a written statement to the effect that in no way was she to interfere with my being brought up in the faith of the Episcopal Church which they regarded as a family possession. How my religious education was to be conducted they did not say and probably cared very little. They themselves had no more hold on the creed they desired for me than a century of family ownership of a pew in St. Peter's, less likely to be occupied by them than their family vault in the graveyard of the church.

Once a month Uncle Dick drove to the city and left with Euphemia a cheque which with economy barely sufficed to keep the household. I am sure that they knew it had been and was, far too little, even with their present addition. Euphemia proudly and silently accepted it without thanks. I am sure that they regarded the narrowed life to which their disapproval and meanness condemned her as proper punishment for what they considered to have been both social and religious apostasy. I suspect that they gave little thought to me, their sister's child, and none as to how I might incidentally suffer from their punitive limitation of Euphemia's income.

Long afterwards, as the years ran on, I often wondered how my cousin regarded the unfriended waif left, as it were, on the doorstep of the small house in Pine Street. She was not fond of children.

If to love them be an animal instinct, it is easily lost by some single women. I suspect that I was regarded by Euphemia at first with a certain dull dislike, then endured and at last loved, for really I must have been as I grew older an interesting little fellow.

But this was years later and when I had learned to move with cautious respect among the sturdy chairs and thin-legged Colonial tables she was happily prevented by poverty from replacing with the ugliness of the furniture of her own day. As I recall the small front drawing-room, there were no ornaments except on the mantel two nankin jars half full of the gathered rose leaves of three generations. There is a French name for these dead rose-leaf treasuries, none in English, I think. An early remembrance is of my cousin, a tall, handsome woman, consulting a family receipt book and adding fresh rose leaves and strange perfumes to those which hands long dead had stored in the blue vases.

If I was for Euphemia an unwelcome guest, I was anything but unwelcome to those other providences, my black nurse, Sarah Koonis, and the yet blacker cook. These women were well learned in babies and my cousin, who at first regarded me as an ever-changing puzzle, very willingly left me in my earlier days to be guessed by the maternal-minded blacks who then and later were my ready vassals.

II

I SHOULD care little to dwell on my childhood were it not that its peculiar conditions and singular social isolation from other young lives left me long without the contradictions and discipline which come out of normal relation to other beings as young as I and of other mental make. I was fortunate in that it did not make me more peculiar, but I am sure that the unusual character of my young life did to some extent affect my later years. I was an only child and a very lonely child.

When is it that we begin to acquire permanent memories? There are mysterious years and at last remembrances of scenes and people with long unfilled gaps and then more distinctly-remembered scenes. The first I now recall impressed me strangely. I see my cousin, a tall, well-made woman, settling a dispute between the baker and our cook. The bill paid weekly was based on the agreement of two tallies, thin laths of wood notched for each loaf by the baker's file when laid together. There was some disagreement. My cousin was angry. I was wondering that anyone ventured to contradict her seeing that she was so big and the baker so small, when I

was told to go into the garden. I went out as ordered to amuse myself in the hundred feet of flowers and grass plots under the peach and apricot trees which bore delicious and forbidden fruit.

Other scenes recur to me, but generally it was this playground and as I became older, when five or six years of age, dull afternoon walks, duller visits to St. Peter's church and overwhelming sleepiness when Euphemia read to me child stories of a morning. My cousin had no idea of fitting the book to my age or sex. When I should have had "Jack and the Bean-stalk" I was dosed with Sanford and Merton—worst of all was a small volume called "Blossoms of Morality." These readings were in the sitting-room on the second floor, which was adorned with ghastly prints of the martyrdoms of saints. Now and then she was pleased to read their lives to me and I made up my small mind, in the odd secrecy of childhood, that these were very undesirable examples, being distinctly aware that even the moderate pain of a spanking was more than enough martyrdom for me.

Such mild punishments as I suffered were caused by my increasing tendency to relate as seen by me things which were, more or less, the product of my imagination, aided by the tales of animals which my nurse told me out of her long-descended negro folklore. Once I related to my cousin having seen a gold coach with elephants pulling it and as I held to it, I was punished for untruthfulness. I told no more tales

and fell back on my own mental company with unshaken beliefs.

I cannot now decide whether I fully believed I had seen certain things which, I became aware as I described them, were not received in a way to encourage me in constant frankness. I dimly remember that I liked to astonish my cousin by my statements. I am now of opinion that my large stories of things seen were, to some extent, exaggerations of things really seen. I suspect, too, that after half believing and telling some wonderful thing, a firm conviction of it as true and real may come about. This happens even to men and, I fancy, more easily to the imaginative young. If thus I now and then got into trouble as an author of fiction, the tendency had for me real values, and was the source of distinct pleasure. I could give many instances of what might be of service were I dealing only with the psychology of a too solitary childhood. I must content myself, however, with such examples as show how convincing may be the imaginations of these early years.

Having seen on the street a boy with a bull terrier with golden eyes he called Mike, I asked for a dog, of which animal my cousin had a horror. Failing in this, I acquired in imagination a bull terrier called Mike. He lived in the garden, learned tricks, loved me and was for nearly two years my inconstant comrade.

Once I saw a circus procession in the street. My nurse went to see this show and I plead in vain to

go. I fell back as usual when denied some coveted sight upon my magical power to realize in imagination what I could not otherwise attain. My nurse's account of the lion tamer filled me with wonder. I tamed two lions and as my cousin had spoken of St. Jerome as a lion for courage, I called one lion St. Jerome and the other, a lioness, Euphemia, to my nurse's delight. I owned thus for a time a strangely peopled world of my own creation.

A child resembles some other animals and has likes and dislikes, not always easy to account for. Mine had cause enough. My cousin as I knew far later revelled in spiritual mysteries with an amazing appetite for beliefs which some have found hard to accept. The credence I desired for my own small products of creative fancy was for her quite another thing, but no tale of mine was too prodigious for my nursery or the kitchen hearers. It was on the whole well that it was so. Even the lesser authors like a receptive audience.

During these years, I dreamed very often of things I had seen. One day Sarah Koonis stopped with me to let the bearers carry out a coffin and told me a man was in it and was dead and would never move or speak again. That night I was pursued over a boundless plain by hosts of coffins. This I dreamed often.

I of course cannot fix the dates of my memories, some being early and some later. I have a life-long dislike of the crucifix as a symbol. This came of a

terrible print on my cousin's wall of the "Agony of the Cross" by Velasquez. It was a present from one of her French friends. With some pride in the gift, Euphemia led me by the hand to look at it as it hung above her prie-Dieu. For a moment I stared at that most realistic of all renderings of the agony of the cross. Then I screamed and ran out of the room. For two or three nights, when about to sleep, I saw the down-dragged figure, the long black locks wet with the death sweat falling over the drooped white face. To this day it is a horrible remembrance. I must then have been about six or seven years old. My cousin still wonders, if I mention it, why it so disturbed me.

Euphemia's consultations with some of her acquaintances who were desirous to assist her in the regulation of my childhood now and then resulted for me in terrible trials. I was to sleep without the light, which my nurse was accustomed to put out later. I was to go upstairs to bed in the dark. Awful shapes followed me, and I could not go to sleep. As usual these arrangements were soon disposed of by my black allies. But for the first time I so resented what was a real cruelty that I confided to my nurse my intention to hoodoo Euphemia. I had heard of this terrible procedure from an aged black woman, our cook's godmother, who was full of African traditional tales of black magic and exceedingly receptive of my cousin's tea. My plan was discouraged and my vengeance foiled.

There were other visiting blacks who enjoyed the hospitality of our kitchen and who were some of them strange and interesting. One aged woman was said to be an hundred years old and to have seen Washington often. She was full of stories about ghosts who were always of great stature and black. Discouraged in regard to questions by my cousin, I saved them for ready answer by a voluble barber to whom I was taken once a month to have my hair cut. This man was a handsome, old light-colored mulatto called Aaron Burr after his putative father as I have since been told. I had heard so much in church of the Holy Ghost that, with my too ready imagination inflamed by kitchen tales of the returning dead, I fell at last into great terror of being visited by this special ghost.

When I consulted my barber, he told me that so long as my hair was cut once a month I was entirely secure. This did relieve me.

My nurse, who pitied my terror, assured me that my barber was right and too advised me not to carry my doubts to Euphemia.

I do not mean to imply that I was long or continually troubled by fear of phantoms, pagan or others. My curiosity was more intense than my fleeting fears and my life was, on the whole, far other than unhappy.

One of my most joyous moments was when Euphemia with many cautions gave me a long-desired jackknife and Sarah Koonis found for me some

pine shingles. When somewhat later I discovered in the attic a box of tools, I began to develop my one practical talent of inventive work. I remember to have made at last a set of jack straws, spillikins my Uncle Richard called them when my cousin proudly exhibited them, and he declared to my joy that some day he must have me in the iron works and that it was time I learned to read.

Euphemia undertook to teach me. I had no desire to assist, and found it hard, until I began to know what a new world it opened among the books with prints my secret prowlings discovered in a wonder-filled attic. On the rule of three we both stuck fast and why some fractions are improper she could not tell me. The day before we came onto this arithmetical obstacle, I had been found guilty of throwing too-well aimed stones at a neighbor's cat and of making faces at a justly angered cook. I was told that it was highly improper, and now I was to discover that certain fractions were improper. I kept my child puzzle to myself, for being at the age of inquiry, I had learned that like certain people who fail of sympathy with a child, my cousin disliked questions, being in fact, although a woman of many books, of very little basic education.

I look back with wonder at the unnatural limitations of my young life and too on the narrowness of Euphemia's. Her few friends were within a small circle of Roman Catholic gentlefolks, descendants of the early refugees who fled from Hayti

or Martinique. Among her acquaintances were also a small number of people belonging to the long-seated Philadelphia families, but most of her friends were old and there were few with whose children I ever became more than merely acquainted. If there had been anyone with the common sense to complain of my strangely isolated life, I might have had it wholesomely bettered. I was, however, a well-contented child, good-humored, gaily inventive, well fed and with Nurse Koonis ready to do whatever I desired.

It can never have occurred to my cousin that I ought to want playmates. In fact, I did not feel or show the want. Her church absorbed Euphemia, as it is apt to do converts; and until later I was in some measure forced upon her attention, she felt no need to enlarge my life. Of my father and mother, who had disliked her change of creed, she never spoke, and I was too young to be exactingly curious, nor were there any relatives to interfere except my uncles, who knew of a child's wants even less than did Euphemia, and even had they known would have cared still less.

Priests from St. Joseph's and St. Mary's were resourceful values in her narrow social life. These clerics drew on her small funds and brought her rosaries and the like. One day a Mission priest gave me an Indian doll, a hideous wooden creature in feather dress and leggins. It pleased me until I showed it to my nurse, who broke into wild anger.

"Why for she let him give you that? The Indians

killed your father, the brave Colonel, way out west! Did no one tell you?'' And then I heard the sad story of a gallant soldier's death.

I remember that a sudden rage possessed me. My nurse said, ''Burn it, Master John,'' but I was not so minded. The martyrs they burned were good. I ran out into the garden and cut off the Indian's head with my knife. I buried him, feathers and all, and stamped on his grave. Then Mike came, but I only sat down on the porch and cried, which was rare with me, realizing in my too vivid way the Indian fight. I was afraid that my cousin would inquire about the doll. It did not concern her. Few things did. Her horizons of interest were limited. They broadened somewhat in later and happier years.

III

MY eighth birthday, August 11, was memorable. My mother's cousin, Mrs. Heath, had recently come from Lancaster to live in a large house on the Germantown road opposite the graveyard where lie the English dead of the battle of Germantown. We were asked to spend Saturday. Euphemia was enough excited to attract my attention. I felt as if we were about to go to a foreign country, for indeed we had never been able to leave the city. My acquaintance with nature had been limited to staid walks in Washington Square. Once we were asked, by Uncle Dick, evidently to Euphemia's surprise, to visit the iron works and remain over Sunday, but a heavy rain forbade my cousin to travel those eight miles and so far as I know we were not again invited. Year after year, we endured the long, hot summer in the city, nor was it the custom then as now to spend the whole summer in the country.

The drive to Mrs. Heath's along the pike, past farms, cattle and country houses was to me as strange, as interesting and as wonderful as it might have been to a young barbarian. I hardly heard my cousin's timid complaints of the risks we ran from being driven so fast. In the large vine-clad

house set back from the road, Mrs. Heath made us welcome with the usual wine and cakes of the day, and Harry Heath being away on an errand I was lightly bidden to run out and play.

My cousin said, "But Ann Heath, he never goes out without his nurse."

"Then it is time he did. What, a nurse at eight! Run, boy!"—my cousin crying, "and do be careful, John!"

I ran out as bidden, feeling the sense of adventure as I saw the chickens, the cows and Harry's pony and his hutch of guinea pigs. I asked a wondering maid what they were.

I wandered down an orchard slope and, aware of joyous iniquity, plucked plums and peaches and climbing my first fence sat down beside the brook which crossed a small marshy meadow.

Here Harry Heath had built a dam and below it a water wheel which did not work. I had then and there a sensation of personal pride because I had contrived to make the hydrant in Euphemia's garden run a better water wheel. Harry might own a pony and guinea pigs, but he could not build a good overshot wheel such as there were pictures of in a book on machines found in our attic. Later when I overheard Aunt Heath say I was more like a nice girl than a boy, this water wheel consoled me and somehow raised my estimate of that human variety, a girl, concerning whom I knew little or nothing.

Pleased with the newly won self-esteem I had

acquired, I went rashly to defeat. Beyond the meadow was a deep spring. Of a sudden I came at its margin upon two unknown creatures, enormous bullfrogs who faced my ignorant gaze with golden eyes. One of them uttered the loud cry boys say is "Bloodynoun." I fled in terror over the brook and up the orchard where I met a handsome lad, Harry Heath, two years older than I and many years wiser in boy knowledge.

Perhaps counselled by his mother and by a very amiable nature he was then and later kind to me and thus began a life-long friendship. After this we were much together for our common good, and through him during our frequent visits I came to know other boys. He was pleased with my inventive capacity and I learned with him to be less fearful and timid and soon became what my Uncle Dick described as rather a handful for Euphemia.

As I heard later, Mrs. Heath wrote to him that it was an outrage to bring up a boy as I was being brought up. He resented the interference, but a year or more later it resulted—I was now about ten—in my being sent to the day grammar school of the university. I do not desire to dwell on the earlier troubles a shy lad met with in the barbarian tribe of boys. Except for Harry I had been worse off, for until he taught me through much tribulation to box, I was sadly bullied and took more and more to my father's books on primary physics and certain of Marryat's novels I found in my attic mine of

treasures, and to attempt to construct in wood the model of a boat with paddle wheels to make voyages to foreign lands on that delightful dam.

Meanwhile I grew large and strong and as I grew became anything but a source of happiness to Euphemia, who was distressed at my desire to accept risks and to escape feminine control and because my boy appetite appeared to her abnormal. She had always had certain odd ideas concerning what and how much I should eat, but as she went to mass daily and very early, my growing appetite was fed at least at breakfast by my old nurse with whatever I wanted. I may thus have troubled somewhat my cousin's meagre purse but I highly approved of the incidental advantages of her religious fervor.

As my little world was thus enlarging the years ran on until at fifteen I was a sturdy boy ready to go to the University, for in those days we went young. Then two events changed to my joy the course of my life.

I had become more venturesome than my Cousin Harry and one day, having great faith in attic contributions to boy resources, I persuaded my doubting kinsman to see if we could not find in their loft strong paper for a new form of kite I had invented. We came on some great folio volumes of accounts on good stiff paper, entirely fit for our use. Mrs. Heath soon discovered that we were sending into the skies the account books of her grandfather, the Quartermaster General of Washington's army. She

was very angry and wrote to Uncle Dick that I "the girl boy!" was leading Harry into mischief and needed the rule of a man. He took no action until the final adventure which came near to ending my life.

I had found some boys at school I liked and when Harry Heath, a favorite of Euphemia, begged that I might spend Christmas with two of the lads whose parents had invited us to visit their home near Atzion Mill Ponds in New Jersey, my cousin, pleased to have me off her hands in the holiday season, gladly assented. For once I was free and in a home joyously hospitable. We skated, sleighed, snowballed, and at last set to work to build on my design an ice boat such as I had seen described. My earnestness overcame Harry's caution. We fastened sleds together, rigged sails out of sheets we induced the maids to lend us and set in place a rudder and the required brakes.

One cold winter morning early all four of us got aboard and with a shout set off before a wild northeast gale over a mile-long stretch of ice which boys called "glip," that is, smooth (not to be found in the dictionaries). The speed was all that could be desired. Harry, alarmed as we neared the farther shore, put on the brakes, which refused to hold. The rudder snapped and all I recall was a quick sense of the peril of stumps in the shallows, a wild crash and then no more.

I woke up the third day a bit bewildered to see

Uncle Dick and a doctor at my bedside. My concussion of the brain got well promptly while I lay quiet thinking over a better brake. Harry broke his collar bone and the others got off with bruises. Ann Heath was furious and Euphemia now declared that I would end badly and confessed future inability to control me.

Two days after my return home, Uncle Dick and Robert called, and I was sent for by Euphemia.

My uncle said, "That was a poor ice boat, John."

"It was the brakes, sir. I can make better ones."

"You might, but you will not. You are to go to the works to-day week."

I said meekly, "Yes, sir."

"Now," he returned, "take care how you behave. There will be no weak woman to coddle you." This was hard on Euphemia, who drew herself up in her chair but said not a word.

"Your cousin has written to me that she is unable to manage you any longer."

"Yes, sir." I knew very well that with the aid of the two blacks, I had of late done pretty much as I pleased.

He said to Euphemia, "You ought to have complained long ago. You have brought him up badly."

"I might have complained," said Euphemia, "but it would have been useless."

"Would it?" said Richard. "Now we must take this unruly lad away. Good hard work at the mills will keep him in order."

"Yes, sir," I said, delighted; "I would like that."

"No one spoke to you. Hold your tongue!"

Euphemia flushed and said timidly, "Must he go? I shall miss him." She looked at me with tearful eyes and indeed had come to love her unmanageable ward.

"What are you crying about?" said Richard West. "You ought to be pleased."

"I am not."

"Well, he must go and learn to behave himself. Here is your cheque, Euphemia. You have mismanaged this boy and now we are to suffer. You will not need as much as when John was with you."

Even then from what the servants said and what, as an observant lad I had seen of poor Euphemia's occasional straits, I knew enough and this meanness shocked me. I hated my uncle then and never after got near to liking him.

Robert said, "I am of Richard's opinion. We ought to have had an account of what was spent on this boy."

Now and for the first time my cousin spoke out the gathered resentment and contempt of years. She rose to her feet and towering over the two small men, said, "Between you there is not enough of honor, manners or kindness to make the half of a man, not to say gentleman. Take your money." Red and angry, she tore the cheque to pieces and threw it on the floor. "I can beg, work, earn my bread, but I will not allow you to insult me."

I never before had felt proud of this high-minded cousin—now I was.

The two dried-up twins looked at her, amazed and for a moment dumb.

"But, Euphemia," said Richard West.

"Euphemia," gasped Robert.

"Show these persons the door, John, the door!"

They went like lambs, speechless.

Euphemia said to me next day, "For your sake, my dear John, I have stood more than you will ever know. Now they fear what our little world will say of them. They have written me an apology and reconsidered their decision. For your sake I accept it, because if I do not you may—oh, you would be taken out of my life altogether and that I could not bear." Then she kissed me, which was rare, and sent me away, my cheeks wet with her tears.

That night, on my way up to bed, I went into Euphemia's sitting-room as usual to bid her good night. I paused in the doorway when I saw that she was kneeling on the prie-Dieu in prayer.

Presently she rose and said, "I was praying for you, John. Sit down by me. I want to say a word. You are going among rough men. Take care of your manners. For a lad, they are good. As concerns your uncles, they are not so hard as they are unthoughtful of others. I wanted to talk to Richard and discuss the propriety of waiting a year before he took you away. I can not always manage you, but I shall miss you. I saw that it was useless to

say that or anything to Richard. He has never been either generous or kind or disposed to listen. He is a man who has neither religion nor manners. As concerns Robert he is not a man—he is a thing. The only difference between them is that each is worse than the other." Never before had I heard from her a word of complaint. "Now kiss me and go to bed. I have lost my temper, but really, Richard West is—there, I am beginning again. Good night."

If Euphemia was troubled at this separation, I was not. For a year or more, indeed ever since Uncle Dick bestowed meagre alms of praise on my spillikins, and said some day the works would be in the place for me I had longed at times with the born inventor's longing for what now was to be mine.

ALL that week I thought and dreamed machinery and on a Monday, with rough working clothes in my trunk, amid the tears of Euphemia and my old nurse, I left home and was driven eight miles to a house near the works, where I was welcomed by the foreman of one of the shops and his wife. They were kindly, childless folk, who were, I fancy, surprised that I was inclined to be pleased at the prospect of hard labour. I arrived at noon and was eager to go at once and visit the long range of shops which I regarded as my future home.

Mark Penryn laughed what he called a good fat-Cornish laugh. He used to say Americans did not know how to laugh.

"Oh, you 'll be having enough and too much of them. It 's the office wants you just now. Come along." This was after the meal at noon.

We walked over the snow, hearing the roar and clang of machines. The singular rhythm of the hammer blows where boiler plates were riveted rang music to me and said bits of phrase which my imagination interpreted after a habit of mine, "Come, come along, along." My whole soul was answering this call.

"You are not hearing me," said Penryn, a ruddy man, humorously kind, "and me a man of nigh to thirty winters discoursing wisdom to a boy."

"It is the great fine noise."

"Oh, is it? A nice new plaything for a little gentleman. My wife has lived thirty summers. You'll be liking her soft woman talk better than mine."

I said quickly, "I did not hear you. It is all so new, and I came to work. Can't a boy be a gentleman and a workman? I 'm sorry I did not listen."

The big man stopped, faced me, set great hands on my shoulders and said, "Keep to that. You 've got a good job. Keep it. Dick West is like to be harder on you than on us. He can't get inside a man and I set it up as sure he 'll always be outside of you. I 've had to break in some boy colts; never had a good one. Do you want a bit of advice?—"

I said "Yes."

"Well, then, listen, and never answer back. Be on time. Say your prayers and be watchful of the cruel ways of machines. Can you use your fists? There are rough lads here."

"Yes, sir, I can."

"We 'll put on the gloves of a Sunday. I 'm an old hand at it. Get the first blow and hit hard—the left hand first, a man never expects that."

With this exposition of the duties of my new life, we came to the office. Here was a large, rather ill-kept room with cobwebbed windows, clerks on high

stools, and the lean, pallid man I knew as Uncle Dick.

He said only, "Come with me, John Sherwood," and entering his private office, bade me sit down. "You look big enough to take care of yourself. Don't bring me any complaints. Be punctual, winter at seven, six in summer. You will be errand boy at this office for two months and here I am not Uncle Dick, but Mr. West."

"Yes, sir."

"I pay your board. Your wages will be three dollars a week, too much Robert thinks. Take this note to Jameson in the boiler shop. That 's all."

I went out. Errand boy! My whole heart was with the noisy machines. After some inquiry I found my man and returning came near the great steam engine. I stayed, catching my breath, fascinated before the huge gleaming fly-wheel, noiseless, a certain majesty in its steadying control. I knew enough to comprehend to some extent the flow of power which belt and rack work were distributing.

Suddenly I heard my uncle beside me, "A half hour on a five-minute errand. Go to the office." I went.

On the miserable waste of waiting hours in the office with nothing to do I need not dwell. "Take a book," said Penryn, to whom I complained. Thereafter I was in my soul's very land of happiness and was not again reproved for idling. He had lent me a volume on the construction of locomotives.

This was late in 1861. The greedy demands of war were already urgent and we were running day and night. Cannon were cast and rifled. There were mortars, shells, engine boilers, contracts clamorous for fulfillment, a great, eager, never-satisfied appetite of the demon war. As boys we had heard the noise of extras called, of battles, death-lists, and knew also of cricket clubs broken up when elder brothers were claimed by the all-demanding conflict. What I now saw served to bring it nearer. These great busy works too were fighting for a nation's unity.

"Once," said Penryn, "we went on quietly making money. Now, it is too much for your uncles. It is all a drive and hurry does kill old men. It is killing those old uncles."

It was not killing me. At last I was set to work in the shops to learn filing, and then as machine boy-aid. I was thus moved as time ran on from one to another piece of mechanism and at last to the engine room.

Of my uncles I saw almost nothing. Robert was rarely seen outside of the counting house. Richard West walked about the works, worried by new machines, anxious and silent. Now and again he sent for me and told me of some change in my work. I never have seen a man who had as limited a range of interests or who transacted the business of life with so small an expenditure of words.

When a foreman complained to Penryn that Rich-

ard West was a hard master, the Cornish man said, "He is a slave, not a master," and yet he chose his subordinates well, as I saw. I got from him neither praise nor blame. Only once in all these years did he ask me a personal question.

"You are to go to-morrow to the boiler work. I see you have a black eye."

"Yes, Uncle."

"Mr. West—lad?"

"Yes, sir, a fight."

"Got licked?"

"No, sir."

"Well, that will do."

This seemed to be the limit of his interest, except that Euphemia and I were year after year invited, in my case ordered, to dine with my uncles on the 4th of July. Euphemia always declined to accept, saying simply that she was unable to dine with them.

It was clearly in her interest to have cultivated closer relations, but despite the poverty which the twins decreed for her, Euphemia was not of the nature which surrenders. She starved herself after I left to give money to the poor and her church, and cherished an abiding sense of insult of which she spoke to me once only when both uncles were dead. I, of course, went to dine as requested.

There was a look of what I may describe as shabby wealth about the house and all I saw; the old silver, uncleaned, stood on the sideboard, and good portraits of Wests and Sherwoods in worn frames hung

on the walls. The dust everywhere would have made Euphemia weep.

The dinner was excessive and the cooking good, but the service by old colored men in much worn clothes was careless and inattentive. Young as I was, the amazing silence of these two old men and their discourteous neglect of the guest made me angry.

The mistakes and disasters of the war they were feeding were scarcely mentioned. When I was older I used to bring in some questions of general concern. I got brief answers and the talk died, in a hopelessly neutral social atmosphere. I used to wonder if these old men loved one another. Penryn said, "No, they are attached to one another, that 's all, far as I can see."

At last, at the close of the meal, the Madeira was put on table and I was given a glass. My uncle Dick rose and said, "The memory of Washington." After dinner both men fell asleep in their arm-chairs and I slipped out, glad to get away.

Once a month, on Saturday afternoon, I walked eight miles to town and spent Sunday with my cousin, or the Heaths, and in searches among the various treasures I still found in my attic room. Euphemia was changing. She was more precise, more inconsequent and not once in these years spoke of my uncles. Now, however, she clung to me as never before, liking my visits and always greeting me with a kiss, which from childhood I disliked

and which as I grew older curiously embarrassed me.

I took away from my treasure-attic more advanced books on artillery and at last my father's sword and epaulettes. Save for my good, shrewd Cornish friends and rare visits to me from Harry Heath, my life was an existence as apart from general human sympathetic interest as had been my childhood.

But I was now eighteen and had found what was for years my most valued association. If I say that I had a sort of friendly relation to the numberless mechanisms among which I moved, it may seem an excessive statement. The vivid creative imagination of child life awoke anew in endless thought of machines I was ever inventing or bettering. I dreamed of them, drew them, was encouraged by Penryn or laughed at as a dreamer, for this is of the poetry of invention. I was sorry when one of our machines went wrong. A false sound struck me. I knew the language of every one of these complex mechanisms, their quick speech, their pauses, or when they stuttered. At any time amid all this whirr and buzz and clatter, I would stop arrested by a wrong note. This is a sure quality of the inventor. At nineteen, I drew and then modelled my well-known device to be attached to cannon in order to register automatically the number of times they are fired. Penryn showed it to Uncle Dick, who was unready to accept novelties, but the Government Inspector at once took it up and it was used on all our cannon.

At twenty I was assistant foreman of the boiler shop and knew the works as no other did. On my birthday, August 11, which has often been the date of memorable incidents, two things happened. The men refused to work inside of a boiler because of the deadly heat. I said at once, "I order no man to do what in his place I would be afraid to do." I stripped to the waist, took a hammer and went in. In two hours I was pulled out insensible from heat stroke. When, three days later, I awakened with no more than a headache, I learned that Uncle Robert West had died suddenly while I was in the boiler.

Uncle Dick and Euphemia came to see me before I was fit to work. He said little except that I was to call on Sunday at ten A. M., but of his brother's death, not a word, nor of my courage, of which Penryn spoke. After this event Uncle Dick became more and more a silent man, although he always appeared to keep himself aware of what I was doing and how my work was done.

What this uncle really was I never knew. The little I did know came to me through Mark Penryn, who lost no chance of setting me before my uncle in a favorable point of view. Mark was right in his judgment of the man as being himself uninteresting, and uninterested except in the accumulation of money which added nothing to the pleasure of life. If he had any other less distinct characteristic it was family pride in our old colonial line, of which once, and

only once, he spoke to me at one of those sombre dinners I so greatly disliked.

Euphemia would not go to Robert's funeral services at St. Peter's. She said, "How can I? For two reasons, John, I cannot."

I did not attempt to reply and then learned from her that Robert had left all of his property to Richard. When I kept the engagement made for me, I learned that I was to have an office room and become assistant to the general manager. It was not quite to my liking, but I was now to receive seven hundred dollars a year and to have more leisure to hatch out the inventions I began to patent and which are, many of them, still in use, especially the air cushion recoil brake, and the determination of the relation of rifling curves to the calibre of ordnance.

Pleasure in the details of a man's work is a valuable asset. I loved it all and still no joy was greater than at night when inspecting the shops, to stand still and hear the thunderous orchestra or to watch the quiet motion of that mighty fly-wheel which had so fascinated me on my first day at the mills.

I could have found pleasure in the company of the highly-educated army officers who came as inspectors of our work and whom I might have found interesting. I discussed with them cannon-rifling and the like and then retired into that silence and self-absorption which is what the inventor craves and the poet must have in his times of product. It

was not altogether good for me. Harry Heath used to say so. I know it now, for the years are wise preachers. I was losing all human interests in the ardor of an entrancing success. Only a woman, *the* woman, could have turned me aside.

For a while I missed the manual labor which had put and kept me in high condition and to keep up my useful habits of exercise I liked better than any sport to go daily to an anvil, take a sledge hammer and get a half hour of violent exercise. In my craving for leisure to invent new mechanical devices which would some time be of use in perfecting our product, I by degrees gave up even this exercise and made the grave error of leaving my own very efficiently trained muscular machinery to almost entire disuse. Neither for man nor engine is that wholesome.

Meanwhile, as a manager of men, I knew myself to be a success. I was familiar with their ways and, having been of them, settled all our troubles with ease. Their illnesses and home difficulties never concerned me. I was becoming merely a perfectly organized mechanism. My friend, Penryn, saw my indifference with obvious regret and would tell me of men hurt or sick. I had the ready answer of money. Had I gone to see them, I should not have known what to say.

I was twenty when the war ended and in the new rivalry of many mills with men more active than Richard West, business fell off. We went back to mak-

ing rails, but there were new methods with costly changes needed and Richard West was by primary organization a thrifty saver of money. To spend was hard. Though reluctant, he did spend out of the great gains of the war, but became by degrees to our surprise irritable and more and more talkative—a strange thing much spoken of among the men.

The new machinery was for me simply delightful and as Richard West took less and less interest in the works, I became in these years more important, desiring no better life than that of the mills, with books of many kinds and my private workshop behind Penryn's house. Harry Heath lectured me in vain. Holidays! My ever-changing work was holiday.

One day he said, "John, how much do you give Euphemia?"

I felt myself flush. I had now two thousand dollars a year and was twenty-five when this question disturbed me. "I have given some, but not enough," I said, as I thanked him, and at once doubled my uncle's scant allowance.

I did not attempt to excuse myself to Euphemia or to myself for having failed in so obvious a duty. In fact, I was absorbed in my work, as only the inventor can be, self-full rather than selfish. The simple way in which Euphemia took my gift and the evident pleasure it gave was agreeable to me, but as an

example did me no good. I cared nothing for money except to pay for books and models.

Thus the years ran on. One day—I was now twenty-nine—my Uncle Dick did not come to the mills. I had gone to Pittsburg about a large contract. Euphemia was summoned in haste, but found him dead. She declined to put on mourning, but advised me to do so. Her epitaph was simple and bitter. "He lived a heathen, John, and he died a heathen. I hope he will not be made to suffer more than he deserves. About Robert—I prefer not to express myself." I said it was a highly Christian verdict. She said it was and was seriously of that belief.

V

I NEVER was attracted by Richard West and did not love him. No one did. I had wondered at times what he would do with his property and what Robert West left him. Now I knew. The mill was mine and a large property well invested. Harry got fifty thousand dollars. No one else was remembered. I was entirely competent to run the mills and asked no better lot and there was much need of changes which I had not been able to effect while my uncle lived. I began by making Mark Penryn manager and between us in a few months we put every department in the highest state of efficiency.

When I told him what was to be his salary, he began to express his gratitude so warmly that I fled with the feeling of dislike to being thanked which I had always had and have still to this day. I never could satisfy myself as to what is the origin of that which is with me a very real feeling.

I knew that I must face it once more now that, the estate being fully settled, I meant to provide fully for Euphemia. I found her in the little parlor hemming the handkerchiefs with which she delighted to provide me. I was in haste to get my business done.

I said, "Cousin, I have put in trust for you enough to give you an income of fully two thousand dollars a year."

She made what Heath called one of those Euphemial remarks which caused people to say she was affected. "John," she said, "that is interesting, but what shall I do with so much money?"

"My dear Cousin, I know very well where most of it will go. But for my sake, do get yourself some decent gowns. You dress abominably. Get some finery. You have a figure worth velvets and a little attention."

"Oh, do you think so?" She was as simply pleased as a child. It was one of her most attractive characteristics.

"And your feet, Euphemia; you know you are proud of them."

"Oh, John."

I laughed. "And here," I said, "are the title deeds of this home."

"Oh, John, and I have not thanked you. I do. I do."

"Yes, yes," I returned hastily. "I have an engagement," and so fled in mild fear of the kiss I disliked.

As I had been to my machines, so now I became to this great business, a happy slave, caring little for money, but vastly enjoying the game of defeating rivals by my new inventions and daring expenditure.

I fully realized that the complete social isolation I liked was clearly impossible for a man in my position. At last I took ample apartments in the city and joined the older club with as little change of life as it was in my power to avoid. Some social engagements I could not escape.

I left my bachelor apartments at eight, drove out to the works, lunched with the Penryns, spent the day, returned to dress and dine at the club and with now and then a dinner party, occasional visits, or a meal with Euphemia and a visit with her to a theatre, I led, save for my cousin and Harry Heath, long since a busy physician, an unfriended life. I kept the old family pew, but went to church only on the Sunday after the anniversary of my father's death. I gave away money to charities, though never largely, and chiefly because Euphemia suggested it as desirable and because my position and family traditions seemed to make it a respectable necessity. I was said to be in my business hard and without interest in the lives of my growing number of workmen. This attitude of mind towards the men I employed is one apt to be reached soon or late by the great employers of labor. I spared neither them nor myself. To me they were like machines. They were to be generously paid, and then set aside if as machines they did not come up to my standard of efficiency. It troubled the Penryns, who could not understand how being as I was lavishly kind to them and to Euphemia I could be so indifferent to others.

If, at times, I had doubts as to the entire wisdom of my life and vague thinkings about what I might do on that some day or other with which the never quite satisfied successful American toys at times, I never set myself seriously to the task of planning any other life. I was to have a rude awakening.

Late in the fall of my thirty-fourth year, I began to feel tired at the close of the day. It is strictly true that I had never felt fatigue of mind or body which was not lost in sleep. Now I woke up unrefreshed. I had the abrupt alarm of the exceptionally strong in the presence of the threat of incapacity. The slight cough I had long ignored became harassing. At times I was chilly. Except once or twice as a child, I had never in my life required a physician, but now my day of need had come.

I have heard other men speak of their dislike to being stripped and intimately investigated by a doctor. It is a manifestation of modesty you may please to think morbid. There appeared to me to be, however, something inexplicably disrespectful in extorting confession from organs which are such intensely personal possessions. When, later, I asked my cousin doctor if men or women were naturally the more modest animal, he said usually men, but that neither man nor any other animal had by nature what we know as personal modesty. One day we will become transparent to that terrible physical confessor, the doctor. Imagine the horror of having your bones indecently exposed, possibly photographed. These

were later reflections. I had a prophetic imagination.

I hated to ask medical advice, but at last I requested Harry Heath to look me over and went through an impertinently close examination concerning my life and habits. In the pride of my vigor disease had always seemed to me an insulting reflection on a man's capacity to take care of himself and now, after being on the medical rack, I was told frankly, as many times before, that I lived an unwholesome life, and with kindly hesitation, for Heath loved me well, a serious bronchitis and that I had possibly, of this he was not at all sure, a small deposit of tubercle at the apex of my right lung. Then I was advised to do this and that and to go to the Riviera or Florida or perhaps Minnesota, with other disgusting orders about cod liver oil and the disuse of tobacco.

When he had gone I sat down to consider what his gravity more than his words seemed to predict as pretty surely the slow torment of useless years and a final death warrant. The mere anticipation of becoming an idle man filled me with horror. I have heard men say they were worked to death, now I was to be idled to death. Heath says that the individuality of the man is always a part of the symptomatology of sickness and is a partner in that grim firm, Disease and Company. I was to suffer for my past habits, because I was myself.

I rose and walked about with fierce will not to be beaten and a sudden realization of the value of life.

I was to escape from the conditions of an artificial existence and as the doctor advised live an out-door life, but he added not too remote from civilized ways. Why not, I thought, rather return as far as might be to such a life as my infinitely remote ancestors led and away from society and its limitations. In the club library that memorable night I read by a happy chance a little essay called "Camp Cure." My two doctors were at one with me, or as near in opinion as one can hope doctors to be. I closed the small book and went home with a mind clear as to what I should do and would do. Harry was in doubt about my novel plan, but I persisted. The scheme was well enough, he said, if I were careful, but I would be unbearably bored and come in at last to some one or other of his plans for more comfortable invalid resorts. I was resolute, Harry said obstinate.

Heath's preference for me of some "invalid resorts" was the final drop in the bitter bucket of advice—a repair shop for a worn-out human machine. I think doctors should be more carefully discreet in their language—"invalid resorts" indeed. I imagine that Heath knew enough of the sick and of me to humor what he saw I would undertake with hope rather than to insist on that which he knew I would simply endure if companioned by despair. He did finally all he could to help me with detailed lists of what I might require.

All this was late in the autumn. I set about at once to see some of my rivals in business and by the

end of March, although far worse in health, I had succeeded in forming a company which took over my mills with royalties on my inventions, and upon terms which made me a rich and independent man.

On the sixth of April I said good-bye to Heath and had to stand a mournful interview with Euphemia, who had evidently heard from Heath what her affection emphasized as a death warrant.

I had before me a yet more painful good-bye. At midday, coughing and out of breath, I climbed the hill to Penryn's house, where for years I had lunched. Mrs. Penryn made me welcome as usual and before we sat down Mark Penryn came in. We talked of the works and, of course, of their sale, which was matter for much comment among the hands. When the meal was over I asked Penryn to come with me to the work shop and library I had built long ago at the farther end of the garden.

"No," I said, when we sat down and he offered his tobacco pouch. "I am forbidden to smoke, Mark."

"Is that so, sir—and you are going away, we hear. My wife says that seems just to be the end of things. Why, you were a lad of fifteen when I first gave you some advice. That 's nigh onto twenty years and now, sir, you 're going to leave us."

"Yes, I am a sick man and how it will end I do not know, but I mean to make a fight for life."

"Mr. Sherwood, you will have the prayers of two old people and you will be missed by many."

"Hardly, Mark."

"Yes, the men dread this change, sir. You are always just and a judge of when work is done well or slighted."

That did, as I knew, charitably express my limitations of interest in their lives, but of his own anxiety as to his future he said not a word. It was like the man. For a moment he sat still, regarding me with his kindly eyes, more moved than his man ways would let him show. I too remained speechless for a minute, thinking of how little I had done to deserve the manifest grief at parting which my old friendly workman was, with small success, trying to suppress.

"Mark," I said, "you are still to be the manager here as long as you please to stay."

"It will not be long, sir. It 's one thing to work with you, but—"

"Oh, there will be no new difficulties."

"Perhaps not."

"These mills owe much to you and I owe you much, Mark. I have put in your name fifteen thousand dollars of the stock."

"Oh, Mr. Sherwood, I could not ever have expected—"

"Don't thank me, Mark," I said. In my weak state I was beginning to find these partings too great a trial. "You are to have this workshop. There are two or three inventions worth patenting. They are yours. That sidegear wheel is one." I rose, say-

ing, "I have some work to do here, papers to burn and other matters."

When alone I sat down and looked about me. It was the most bitter hour of a life quite without sorrow or disaster. Here were many models of machines in use or half perfected or never to be bettered, the wild, materialized dreams of an inventor. The walls were covered with mechanical drawings, some as old as my early days at the mill; others newly made plans yet to be worked out.

I got up and walked about. And so this was the end for me of ideas which were to have changed the iron industry of a continent. What a man may say in the face of defeat like mine is hardly to be guessed. What I did say was simply, "Damn!" as I walked out the back door, of no mind to encounter again the two good people whose troubled affection had so surprised me. I heard, as I moved away, the clatter and roar of busy machines and the strong voice of the great trip hammers. They came and went and were lost. No music had been as pleasant to me as had been this grim orchestra.

I had read or heard of men wrecked in life or heartbroken by some failure to keep the love of woman. I knew nothing personally of such ruined hopes. I laughed bitterly as I went down the hill. These seemed small griefs compared to the anguish of mental disappointment a cruel fate had dealt out to me. I had closed one chapter in the book of life. What would, what could the next hold on its unread pages?

VI

I OWNED as my small maternal heritage, a thousand acres on the north coast of Maine, long cared for by my uncles, and later by me. It yielded nothing but taxes. Hither I sent in advance my capable black servant, Dodo, with full orders and discretion as to what I had thoughtfully considered needful. With increase of doubt on the part of my doctor, I left home to find Dodo at Belport, Maine, with a sailboat ready. He had been two years in the navy and was as pleased as a child to be in command of a boat.

The day was warm, the breeze was gentle, the sky without a cloud. I lay in the catboat, weary in body and feeling the slight depression of spirits which I have always felt in the spring and fall for a brief season. Now and of late it had been present in great intensity. It was not fear which caused it nor yet the dread of being incapacitated. I had read that the tubercular are said not to feel the melancholy which accompanies some other maladies. It seemed to me therefore a good symptom.

I smiled to think what a little thing will flatter hope and as I lay at rest in the boat determined not to indulge my moodiness. At home, events hustle

one's moods, imminent duties keep a man from thinking morbidly, but here would be perilous leisure for harmful self-study. I made up my mind that the cave ancestor I was to imitate would need to have some distinct physical work and a more methodical existence than I had first thought of as desirable.

As I let my mind wander, I wondered lazily if there be a par of human happiness with normal range above and below which excess in either direction must be regarded as abnormal. This would define insanity as a matter of degree. Perhaps continuance of excess might also have to be taken into consideration. To laugh, be hilarious, or violently angry for a month would be serious. Who was it said that cheerfulness is the temperate zone of life? I smiled to think how even the best-governed men at times are drifted away on the derelict slave-ship of a mood to the tropics or the arctic zone. It is, I concluded, the duration of our moods which we must watch with care, and as I found later there are rough physical resorts which rout a mischievous mood when reason fails to be of service.

I began to watch Dodo's handling of the boat and to ask quick questions about it, for in all my life I had never been in a sailboat. Here was a new and interesting machine. When Dodo did not know why it was called a catboat, I wrote a word of query and this was the first use of the notebook which has received since then so many confidences, so many questions earth will never answer. When I fell into

silence, Dodo would have me take the tiller and pleased at being my master was glad in his obvious way to see me interested. In fact, this white-winged, sensitive thing won my heart on first acquaintance and was soon or late to treat me to wiles and wooings and temptations such as lured Ulysses. I soon came to understand why a boat is she.

At last Dodo exclaimed, "There 's the tents!" A deep, nearly land-locked bay, a sound, the fishermen call it, lay before me. Unbroken forests, chiefly of tall pines and red oaks, came down to the shore. A mile or more away a mountain range crowned the horizon. There was no sign of human habitation except three white tents set on a granite promontory some fifty feet high within the loop of the bay.

We tacked to avoid a little island and a reef of rocks and came to anchor inside of it where lay a canoe on the shore. I had a sudden realization of ownership and the delight of a child as I saw beside my cliff home a bountiful brook which came forth of the dark woodland in a single leap of some twenty feet and fell crushed to snowy whiteness on the beach. We walked up the rocks and before me were the three tents set on the verge of the forest with no tree in front of them except a single aged red oak now reminding me in its young foliage that I had come into a land just answering to the call of spring.

In the mid space was my day room. Aided by carpenters from Belport, Dodo had laid floors and dug around the sides of the tents little ditches for

drainage. The central tent was large and square. There were camp chairs, a lounge, book shelves, tables roughly built and racks for the guns and rods I was for the first time in life to learn to use. The night tent was smaller and simply furnished. That to left was for meals. Out of it at the back, a covered canvas way led to a small log-built kitchen and a tent for Dodo.

A word of my man Friday is here in place. He was a middle-aged Maryland ex-slave who had been to sea in the navy, served as a young teamster in the war and by good fortune come to be something for me between servant and friend. Perfect cook, ready handed and dog-like in his affection, I could have had no companion, for he was that at need, better suited to my wants.

When once I asked him where he got his odd surname, he replied with a grin, "My father, he opened the Bible and took for luck the first name he saw. Nobody else got a name like that." He had a sense of ownership of the unusual which was clearly a source of pride. I verified his authority. What he lacked was singular. He could neither read nor write and declined my early efforts to have him taught. I came to the belief that he regarded his ignorance as a distinction.

He wound with care a noisy Yankee clock which clucking endlessly seemed to me to be calling the minutes like an old hen. What it meant for him I never knew for he could not tell what o'clock it was except

by the sun shadow in the doorway of the kitchen. If in gray weather this failed him, he would ask me near the meal hours to look at my watch to see if his clock was right, all of which I gladly humored.

His memory was to me a constant wonder, for he knew no arithmetic and yet kept in his head any and all details of what he bought and paid, being a sharp bargainer.

There was in the man, however, as in all of us, something of the primitive barbarian. When later I was on the water or otherwise absent and his work done, he whistled to Mike, the bull terrier named for the imagined dog of my youth, and disappeared into the wood, finding his way with the sure instinct of an animal. What he did, he and the dog, I never knew, and this side of Dodo was and remained mysterious. He at least had an enviable absence of moods and was at all hours a temperately joyous creature with pride in his capacity as a cook and liking a word of praise. He was reserved and somewhat suspicious of strangers, expressing what he called his notions to me with confiding frankness but with a quite feminine incapacity to give reasons for opinions which were hardly to be called judgments but were usually correct.

I soon learned in camp what I could not have learned in a city, that he was a creature in whom the failing instincts of the primitive man were still preserved and the senses amazingly acute. He never would, perhaps never could, tell me why he was so

surely sensitive to coming changes in the weather. Physically he was a tall, strong man of athletic build, wearing a constant smile which showed his large white teeth. He ate like an animal, when he was hungry, observing no regularity as to the time of his meals.

The life I proposed was one which in those days seemed so unpromising a resort that, as I have said, I had not been without medical and other prophecies of disaster. Nevertheless, I still held to my confidence in my plan of battle with disease. After the first two weeks of increasing cough and high evening temperature, a quite abrupt change for the better gave me the tonic of hope and I wisely put away my thermometer.

My life had been made up from my youth of laborious days. Incessant work and the attendant responsibilities had become, as is apt to be the case, necessary to the happiness of an existence in which constant success had rewarded labor so that at times I was bored by the enforced idleness of the Sunday quiet. I had been always able to control events and caring far less for money than for the game of contested supremacy in business, I had found little to disturb my belief in the permanence of things.

The invasion of what seemed likely to be a mortal malady shocked me into the conviction that something in my plan of life must have been wrong. My cousin, the doctor, left me, as concerned this question, not the least chance for self-excuse. Such an illness seemed

to me to be a mockery of the intelligence with which a man should be able to guard his health and now I was to suffer for the unwisdom of years.

I confess to some dismay as I looked forward during my early life in camp to being materially unproductive and to devoting the machinery of a trained mind to filling the long days of threatened emptiness which lay before me. Here were no new problems to interest me. The camp was disappointingly complete. There was nothing for my mechanical talent to perfect. I had only to arrange for my house-keeping supplies and then fall upon some routine of wholesome life. At first it seemed to me rather singular that I, who had rejoiced in battle with rivals and in the difficulties of old machines or new unworkable processes should have been so troubled at the prospect before me. I think this was because for two weeks I was daily losing ground and was losing interest as I lost health. Then, as I have said, the wholesome life began to be felt in many ways.

I had looked to my present plan as merely a disagreeable necessity. That it was to be for me the revolutionary source of new pleasures and was to enlarge my horizons more and more I learned later and only by degrees. Least of all did I anticipate that such an entire change in bodily habits could affect a man's character and his relation to his fellows. I was in fact in the hands and under the discipline of a schoolmaster with power to evolve what my previous life had masked or discouraged.

The irritability new to me, and caused by disease and its effects on my competencies, began to disappear with my recovery of health and vigor. I observed with curious pleasure, the fact that I was beginning to have brief moments of simple enjoyment in things to which before I had been carelessly indifferent. The imaginative capacities of childhood, long diverted into the service of inventing mechanical devices, were again awakening for simpler forms of use and creating new joys.

The sense of being born again into health is as if the world thus won again were also renewed. I have not heard anyone who had become well after nearly fatal illness mention the unexpected happiness of convalescence. I myself find it hard to speak without exaggeration of the distinct pleasure given by loss of pain and all forms of distress, by daily increase of strength and desire to use it, by freshened sensory appreciations and a contented languor of mind indisposing to serious mental pursuits. All nature daily wore for me novel aspects as if not only I myself but the world grown sick were freshly convalescent.

The habitual reversion to protective observation of nature such as my cave ancestors must have found needful did at times surprise me. My man Dodo had it always. Thus I soon began to discover interest in the changes of the weather, a matter which in the city concerned me of late only as exacting care in regard to clothing. Nature became to me a comrade

worthy of increase of intimacy, repaying attention with gifts small or large.

As the days ran on and my inner self ceased to exact care of symptoms and to intrude consciousness of the abnormal, I began to take satisfaction in filling a notebook with sketches in words. Except in mechanical drawing, I have no skill with the pencil, but I learned so to set scenery in words as to answer in place of photographs, which I do not like.

VII

A WEEK later, my domestic affairs having been ordered to my temporary satisfaction, there came one afternoon in a sailboat from Belport my agent, Jones, whom until then I had never seen. I had written of my new plan of life and wanted to ask him certain questions, for which I learned the need at Belport. Now, however, I met him with dissatisfaction because of this intrusion of mere business on my new and solitary life.

As we sat down in front of my tent, he declined whiskey and a pipe to which my gain in health had tempted me to return. He was silently regarding my outfit. Then he guessed I would n't bide long; it was too lonesome. I thought otherwise and heard vague talk about taxes which concerned me in no wise. There were three squatters on my land and these voluntary tenants, he said, were using my forests pretty freely. There was good landing and it would pay right well to cut the big pines.

"Cut my pines?" I said. "Not a tree, Mr. Jones, not a stick. They are my friends and the company you would like to organize may go to a place where fuel is not needed."

Evidently he thought me somewhat eccentric and I began to re-open the only subject in which we had a common interest, my tenants. He became at once voluble and talked of the rights of property. One man had been there on the main road to Belport many years; that was Peter Christian. I 'd got to deal with him and he ought to pay higher rent.

I asked, "Does he raise chickens?"

This he considered, as I thought, more reasonable and as having applicative value. "Well, I guessed you 'd find out he could pay more rent. He don't pay none, or not regular."

I said I would take my rental in kind, on which he was of opinion that there would be an immediate rise in the market value of chickens.

Then he looked about him as if in thought and illuminated his lean, sharp face with a smile in honor of a victorious capture of a fresh idea.

"Well?" I queried.

"It ain't only this waste of lumber, but to see them pines and right to hand that there idle waterfall that 's never done any work since the Lord set it a-going." This incursion of an alien bit of imagination into a business view of nature is not very rare in the rural New England mind, sentimental enough, but shy of emotional expression. It was at that time odd to me.

My reply was quick and almost angry. "You may have heard of the lilies of the field."

He grinned with unexpected comprehension as I

added, "That brook is going to be idle and loaf all my life and do no work and run no mill wheel."

"Guess He as set it going meant it to be of use. Now the lilies was n't made to be of any use except to look pretty." He nodded his head to emphasize his consciousness of having settled that question and me.

"Well, yes," I laughed, vastly enjoying the talk; "yes, but if you think the only use of the lilies was to look pretty, you had better go home and read your Bible. They waited a long time to be considered. You might ask Mrs. Jones."

"I will. I will. I don't see your p'int."

"I think you will see it. This brook is for me a big water lily, Mr. Jones. It shall toil not nor spin anybody's wheel. Let it alone. Perhaps God set it here to be the friend of a tired, sick man. Let my babbling friend alone."

He grinned maliciously. "It 's been an awful waste waiting for you these years."

"That may be, but think of those lilies. They waited long."

"I don't see it."

"Perhaps you never may. What of my other tenants?"

"There 's that Hapworth. He 's a sort of no account wastrel. He does n't work and he lives alone and buys what he wants. He does pay rent, but what with the road tax and one thing and another it is just swallowed up."

"Then he has some means."

"Must have. He says he can leave the land, but won't come and see you."

This tenant interested me. Why need he come? "What of the other man? You mentioned another. I think you spoke of three?"

"Oh, Bob Cairns. Well, Mr. Sherwood, there was an ugly story about Cairns and he just left Belport years ago, because folks would n't have nothing to do with him. He was n't real bad. I don't know the right and wrong of it."

I was curious, but seeing that Jones was disinclined to commit himself I let it drop.

"You might have him come and again you might n't. He don't pay much rent and being a right misfortunate man I guessed you would n't wish to have me push him."

This seemed unlike Jones, but I said, "Of course not. Well, what else?"

"He 's a quiet man, 'bout your age, a kind of too to himself man. He is either working like mad or loafing round. Hapworth 's been teaching him some. He 's great friends with the Christians. They do say he and Susan Christian 's keeping company. I don't believe it. If someone wants help in harvest or gets sick, he 'll drop anything to go and tend to them. He won't come and see you. Keeps to himself. He pays rent in wood, off and on. It about covers the taxes. He 'll sit and look at the sea and bide till Dagett's boat comes to shore with fish.

They 're a queer lot. Now I 'm done business, I'll sample that whiskey."

I called for Dodo, who came with the liquor. Mr. Jones took it with appreciative slowness and became taciturn with now and then a glance of regretful appreciation at the tall, moveless pines, which seemed to me like proud, indifferent gentlemen, unthoughtful of the guillotine of the axe. Then this incarnation of business greed stood up and looked to the left at my friend, the brook, with its many voices of joy, praise or prayer, which I had learned already to love and interpret. I too rose.

"It 's an awful waste," he said persistently. "You might think it over. It 's jest pine trash."

"Perhaps," I returned, smiling, "you and I are wastes. There may be in us values we have never yet put to use."

"Maybe that 's so," he returned, with more appreciation than I could have expected, "but if I was you—"

Here Dodo appeared. "There 's a thunderstorm coming, sir. The gentleman might like to know it." Except for a low-lying bank of clouds on the southwest horizon I saw no sign of a change in the serenity of a pleasant April day, for the season warm and with a mild norther blowing.

"How do you know?" I said to Dodo.

"It 's coming, sir." He had no other comment to make, but his certainty disturbed my agent, who made haste to his boat, set sail and was soon far out in

the bay, Dodo remarking, "He 'll have to land somewhere, sir, or he 'll never see Belport again. He 's got a mean face, that man." This was like Dodo.

"Nonsense!" I said, but he had.

When he left me, I went down the slope from my tent to the cliff and sat some fifty feet above the sea thinking of these strange tenants and what fate had brought them to this wild-wood shelter. What did it matter to me? My own cause for this flight from the familiar was simply the desire to live and to live in health. Every day was now giving me joyous intimations of the success of my experiment. I felt that certain generous intentions in regard to my queer wood neighbors were wholesome additions to the physical joy of mere living when everything about me was raining sweet influences of which I was conscious as never elsewhere or hitherto.

Behind me the squares of my tent home stood white against the dark wood spaces where, free of underbrush, were only the motionless pines of a pathless wood. Along the shore beyond my brook the waves lifted and let fall the green things of the great sea garden. There was some suggestion of a lazing mood in the way the slow water rolled up the shore and loitered seaward. I was to become, as never before, familiar with the ways of ocean and to find how easy it was and how natural to see in it something far more alive than anything else which nature presented. But for this one must be living alone with the sea and have some sense of comradeship such

as is not easy to inland folk nor to all nations. Just now I lay still on the rock edge, noting that the afternoon light was lessening and the water over the shallows of delicate purples. The low-lying clouds to southwest soon to fulfill Dodo's prediction were vast, wind-tumbled masses. A quick little shiver breezed over the quiet ocean which had just now the stillness of a mobile thing expectant of change. I was learning to recognize the ways of this other larger friend. How much of my interest and joy was what anyone would have felt, how much of it the wholesome contribution of health creating something new to me, strange to me, mysteriously delightful, breeding meditative moods. On leaving I had said laughing, to reassure my much-valued Roman Catholic cousin, Euphemia, that I was about to make a Retreat. She said gravely, "Oh, John, if you really would!" I must write to her.

I felt the chill of the herald breeze and had a solemnizing realization of terror and majesty in the death-laden possibilities of the darkening clouds under which the sea of a sudden lost its look of translucent blue brightness and took on a dull leaden gray.

Then I was startled to hear behind me a grandly mellow roll of thunder and turning saw that another storm was coming from the northwest. A moment later a succession of jagged lightning lances flashed before and back of me with crash of incessant thunder. I have seen this meeting of two storms but once since. The southeast array passed far above

the lower level of the norther. The wind among the pines moaned, shrilled, and in a minute the sea was in an uproar and the rain falling in torrents. I fled, laughing, to the shelter of my tent. A blinding flash lighted the dark wood spaces and turned to the gold of a moment every falling raindrop. The thunder roll was as to time almost as one with the lightning.

My dog, Mike, had no enjoyment of this terrible orchestra. He set up a long howl and I ran into the kitchen, hearing Dodo groaning. I found my man under the mattress. Here were two animals in extremity of fear. It is vain to argue with emotion so profound. Mike followed me back to my tent and while I watched the two armies of cloudland the dog at each reverberant thunder peal howled piteously, crouching close to me where I lay in the tent. I at least should have been the most alarmed by this vast display of electric energy, for when yet a lad at the iron works in a field under a willow, I was struck by lightning and was insensible for some minutes. The man beside me was paralysed. As I had never heard of a person twice struck the chances of escape were in my favor. The Romans would have regarded me as one forever sacred, the chosen of the gods. Next day I told Dodo of my escape when a youth. He concluded that it was safer to keep away from me in a thunderstorm. I understood his logic and he was indeed quite serious.

I had been much confined in the city even in sum-

mer when a lad and during these later years, deep in the cares of a great and successful factory, had desired no holiday. The vast dramas of nature went on with small attention from me. A thunderstorm was merely an inconvenience or agreeable as laying the dust of the town. Sunrise, the spring of day, I had not seen in years with any feeling but a desire to sleep longer, nor had the roof-bounded oblongs of cloud or sky in the city possessed for me the least interest. I may be rather overstating it, but in fact I was never free from such occupative care as leaves no true leisure and is good as a permanent thing, neither for body nor mind.

Now I was a toilless man, acquiring abrupt additions of interest in this new world. I had regret when this splendid spectacle of the two storms was at an end. I felt that I should have attended more carefully to what passed and as nature is an artist who never duplicates her works, I might not see again so rendered the like of this changing drama of the April day. I had for the first time in this storm a personal concern I could not explain and which I discovered to be hard to set in words.

The two storms, alive with incessant violet light, their thunderous challenge, the sea lashed by obliquely driven gray columns of rain and what seemed like a personal fury of wind, getting noises out of sea, shore, rocks, trees, and the hum of the rain, yes, of these I had awe, but I had also a sense of elation, of glad uplift of soul, pride in that I had

no fear and stranger still the feeling that I was a part of it all. I am on the verge of saying something foolish in my effort to extort from words what it is not in their power to state. Let me call it a mood and leave it. The condition of exaltation faded as the sun broke out over a tossing sea.

At breakfast the next day Dodo showed some uneasiness in regard to the material matter of food supplies. I set it aside to be thought of only by Dodo. I told him we would settle the fish and lobster question with Dagett, the fisherman; in fact, he had done so. I said I meant to take my rent in chickens and eggs from the Christians and hoped too to be quit of condensed milk. Then Dodo said, "They won't do it, sir. They think maybe you 'll pay."

"Have you been to call on these confident folks?"

"Kind of."

"What do you mean? Did they talk to you?"

"No, sir. I just wandered round about at dusk. I saw his chickens. I got some of your eggs, too. I saw the man and his woman." I concluded not to press my inquiry as to how the eggs changed owners.

"He 'll be here to-day."

"How do you know that?"

"Oh, I was around in the wood and I saw him pointing and she laughed and she pointed too. They was talking about you and Jones."

"Well, we shall see, Dodo, and afterwards we will visit these others. I want things settled."

My tenant did not come that day nor the next and

meanwhile I was childishly impatient to finish with business. I recognised it as an unusual state of mind. There was much to make a man impatient in a factory and its work, where methods were continually undergoing change and the men who as a majority dislike all new ways were forced at times to re-learn their trade. Yet one of my old managers said I was a moral for patience. I liked the phrase. The mechanism of the practical mind-workings of the American mechanic interested me only as did our mill machinery and whenever I was interested, I became in proportion patient. Now without due reason and because matters of the utmost simplicity did not get adjusted to my desire, I wanted to go at once and settle all these squatters in a day.

When I proposed to Dodo to go with me, he had always something he must do. I could not go alone, for after twice losing myself in my thousand acres of wood and once discovering a marsh with perilous depths, I declined to go again until Dodo had blazed a trail. Even then and far later, I was apt to lose my way because amid the delightful distractions of the spring foliage I lost at times the needed on-guard attentiveness, and once off the trail, no baa lamb was more helpless than I. For Dodo I was a great personage and so entire was his respect that he could not understand why I was not able to do what he did so easily. I heard him later explaining it to Mr. Cairns with the confident fidelity of his race, "Any dog could find his way, but Mr. Sher-

wood have too big things to think about. If he wanted, he 'd go like the bees fly.''

No wanting would have taken with me the place of the faculty of orientation. I presume that to mean originally knowledge of where the east lies. To know that and then that the west lay behind one should make the rest easy—theoretically. If to possess the power to find your way be an instinct for which the rising race has substituted intelligent attention, the child should still have the gift as being more the animal, but who so easily lost? These little problems stuck to me like burr grass to my trousers. At home they were out of my sphere of thought as needless because I dwelt only on what concerned the day's work. Here they became vital questions. Let me call it the compass sense. Unused to reason on such matters, I found it confusing and kept asking myself questions I could not answer. To trust reason at the helm is for me at least unworkable here in the ocean of a wood. I am unconscious that I have any other guide. I wonder if the woman has preserved more of the instinctive capacities than the man. My doctor tells me that if you label or number for identification a dozen babies a week or so from birth, the mothers can not pick out their own. Could a bitch or cat find pup or kitten under a like test and if so would it be all by instinct, or by use of capacity for detective observation?

In this wilderness, to find your way or not be able to do so may be a question of life or death.

Some practical lessons led me to think over this question. I spent an evening in thought and thought record over such questions, the origin being a certain annoying wonder because of this absurd incapacity to do by use of intelligently guided care what Dodo did with the easy use of some mystery of guidance. I went to bed and for the first time since I took to outdoor sleep, slept ill and dreamed indistinct horrors. I coughed hard on awaking at dawn although I had almost lost that reminding symptom. I wrote in my notes some conclusive self-advice and went out to watch the sunrise. The sun rose to left of me over a low headland and the lateral light on the sea was gloriously new. I stripped and ran down to the beach and, as was now my habit, since I became better, took a startling cold dip and then a douche of fresh water where my brook fell on the beach. I ran back refreshed to sleep again as a child sleeps, until called over and over by Dodo.

I was busy next day writing some orders to enable Dodo to get the still-needed canned food from Belport as well as my letters, when I was aware of a round-faced, rubicund man of about fifty, at the tent door. Although very fat he moved with the alertness of some over-stout men. I was sure it was my tenant Christian and promised myself an occasion of humorous interest. Coming from a region where the ownership of land was long settled and the squatter was unknown, I was curious to see what my land pirate could have to say for himself. Dodo, with his

unreadable dark mask of a face, set out two camp chairs in front of the tent under the great red oak, the only tree between my tents and the sea.

Mr. Christian said, as I rose to meet him, "Thought I 'd just step over and see how you are fixed."

"Glad to see you. Sit down."

With the anxious care of the overly heavy, my guest confided his weight to the light camp chair which creakingly complained of an unusual responsibility. Dodo left us, but I heard now and then from the space behind my tent his ill-restrained low laugh, for his hearing was as keen as his other senses and the racial humor of his people was unfailingly ready.

"Glad to see you," I said, and waited.

"Had an awful poor time last year, up my way."

"Indeed. How much land have you cleared?"

"'Bout twenty acres, no account land."

"Good for potatoes?"

"Potatoes! 'Bout as big as walnuts."

"What about chickens?"

The remonstrant camp chair creaked uneasily. "Oh, a few, what with the vermin, foxes and pip they 're no good."

"You have now," I said, "some thirty-seven."

"Who told you that?"

"No matter. Do you cut my wood for sale in Belport?" This was my first allusion to ownership.

"Guess a man 's got to live and bile things and keep warm. Maybe I do cut some."

"On another man's land?"

"No one 's asked me for no rent but wood till just lately." I thought this quite likely, my agent having been, I suspected, somewhat vitalised by my unexpected coming. There was more to learn later about Jones.

"Well, you squat on land not your own, clear twenty acres, cut and sell another man's wood, sell potatoes and chickens. When did you first settle here?"

" 'Bout twenty-one years this spring."

"Twenty, I think. And what now do you propose to do?"

He set a huge hand on each knee and bent forward. "Will you sell? Seems I a'most earned that land. Would you sell?"

"No, I will not sell."

"Well, 'bout rent?"

"I will not rent it."

"Mean it? Won't rent and won't sell?" His face reddened, his hands shut and opened. His emotion gave better evidence of the value to him of this little farm than his verbal statements. The man's distress troubled me. He wiped his forehead with his sleeve, looked about him like a resourcelessly trapped animal and stood up with, "If you 're of a mind to profit by twenty years of a man's work and won't sell and won't let, I suppose the old woman and me has got to go. The law 's on your side. I never thought to stay when I first come. Guess I 'll go."

"No, wait a little. Mr. Christian, the law is not on my side, not the law of decent kindness. If you will supply me till November with chickens, eggs and milk, I will give you your twenty acres and ten more of woodland on the main road, if you like that best."

"You ain't foolin' me?"

"I? No indeed." His look of puzzled incredulity was plainly to be read. I repeated my terms.

"There ain't nothin' back of it?"

"How can there be?"

"It 's sort of overcomin'. Guess I 'll have to talk it over with my old woman." He neither accepted nor rejected nor even thanked me, but was clearly suspicious of what was so unheard-of an offer.

"Wait," I said, and going into my tent wrote and signed an agreement in the form of a distinct promise. Then I called my man and said, "Here is your name. Put a cross here between Dodo and Key." I read it to the pair. Dodo grinned, but said no word. The other man read it and put it in his pocket. "Have to ask the old woman. Good-bye. Let you know."

A few moments later he reappeared. "Well?" I queried.

"I was wondering how many chickens you 'd want."

"About five hundred," I cried, laughing. "Let me hear from you to-morrow. Good-bye," and I went into the tent.

Why did I do it, I asked myself. At home I was regarded, and I knew it, as an exact man in my dealings, and among my hands as a man stern and just in my ways, but without more interest in the home lives of my working people than had many other worried employers of labor. Various influences were now acting upon me, the largest being a sense of increasing pleasure in life and a quite novel desire to have the world about me share in my contentment. The cost was of no moment to me. I was buying peace of mind. At home I liked a sharp business battle, here I would have escaped it at far greater cost.

Next day I was lying supremely lazy on the cliff watching the gulls with a good glass when Dodo appeared. "Here 's Mrs. Christian come to see you, sir."

He was followed by a thin little woman of perhaps forty years. She was bareheaded, with an immense and as I thought inconvenient amount of very black hair of uncommon silkiness. I never could remember or describe a woman's dress. I had, however, an impression of great neatness and of a face which was pleasingly unusual, for below the black hair the eyes were darkly but distinctly blue. The full face was too thin. The side face might have served for the profile on a Greek coin. She was smiling as she set at my feet a basket of eggs and said, "I ran quick, Mr. Sherwood, for fear you would change your mind."

Mike came and put his nose up to meet the touch of her hand as she said, "Lord, but he 's got eyes of gold."

This was pretty clearly the thinking partner. "Take a seat, Mrs. Christian. Your husband seemed to be in some doubt about my offer. He appeared to me to think I had something to my own advantage behind it. Why he was suspicious I really fail to understand. Perhaps you do."

"Well, it 's just this way. Since my husband was a lad, he has never had anyone to do anything for him without they was expecting to swap favors. He 's a real good man, Mr. Sherwood, but he 's right simple about bargains and he gets cheated every time. So when he could n't of a sudden explain to himself why a stranger should just drop down and say, 'Give me a few fowls and I will give you thirty acres of land,' he began to think about it until he got puzzled and suspicious like. The fact is, the folks hereabouts are all that way."

"I see," I returned.

"And it does seem to you right unusual, now does n't it? I hope it don't vex you right much."

She was obviously anxious and I liked her defense of her husband. "Yes," I replied. "It is, I suppose, somewhat unusual, but perhaps I too am unusual."

"Now," she exclaimed with animation, "That 's just about what I told Peter. Guessed you had some good reason."

I liked her. "I will tell you why I did it if you care to hear."

"Now, I 'd like right well to know."

"Come into the tent," I said.

She was unembarrassed, her voice low and pleasant, an example of the accident of refinement, which is seen now and then in the American woman of her limited opportunities.

"Take the eggs, Dodo, and get tea and biscuits. The fact is, Mrs. Christian, why I gave you the land I am not quite sure. I have not been much of a giver."

"Jones he said you 'd been more of a getter."

"Did he?" I said, vastly amused.

"Did Peter ask how many chickens you might want?"

"He did."

"And eggs?" she cried.

"No."

She became of a sudden quiet. "He has had a hard life, my man," and now her eyes filled and she took my hand. "I just don't know how to thank you."

"I am thanked," I said. "I was. I am. Let us drop it. The land is yours. I will see to the deed. A cup of tea, one lump or two?"

"Two, please." She looked about her, curious. "Books! Now perhaps you might trust me with one or two some day if the eggs are good."

"Take what you want. Take them now." She

rose quickly and began with frank interest to look over book after book. Then she turned to me, "Tell me what to take. I shouldn't know to choose."

My choice was experimental. I gave her "Cranford," and hesitated. "Would you like a book of verse?"

"I don't know. Try me. When I was at school I did read some poetry."

I gave her "Childe Harold." What would she make of it?

"That will do, sir. Lord, it 's raining riches. Now I must go. My basket, please. You might tell your man to mind me to give him an apple pie when he comes to fetch the chickens. And come yourself. You will want to see the big spring. Folks often come to see it. I don't mind me of the Indian name, but it means just something like Earth Laugh. You see, sir, it kind of chuckles like it was glad to get into the sun. Come and see it. Good-bye."

VIII

I HAD now been nearly a month of varied weather in my camp and with rare exceptions had been steadily gaining. To my surprise east winds no longer affected me and my spirits rising gave me with new strength, desire to use my strength.

The day after Mrs. Christian's visit Dodo arranged a cold meal for my luncheon and sailed away in the catboat to be gone over night, having errands in Belport. I was rather pleased to be left to my own resources. Next day after breakfast, I determined to try the woods once more and, not to be lost this time, made up my mind to trust the guidance of my friend, the brook, which I knew must lead me near to the home of Christian, and how stupid not to have thought of this before. I took a pocket compass and my stick and set off up the stream.

I felt the joyous call of a cool, sunlit day as I wandered inland by the water side where the great pines, spruce and tamarack rose about my path, motionless green tents. At my feet the brook slid over shallows or leaped little moss-clad rock ledges, noisily boisterous, saying things or luring me to find echoes in my mind. Now it was, "Cheer up" and now, "Yes, sir," or something as childish. Then there

was a glowing, sun-lighted pool where the merry, mischievous thing seemed to pause, silent and motionless as if in thought, and then was away again, dancing water, sun braided, tossing the light about. I wondered how the long lances of light got through the thick greenery overhead and of a sudden too how I, of all men, should have come to read joy and life into the simplicity of these wilful waters.

I lighted my after-breakfast pipe and sat down to watch the alert nimbleness of the darting trout. I had learned to use tobacco when a man of twenty. Penryn used to say, "Be a master of the pipe and not its slave. I stop of a Sunday to see who 's boss, me or the pipe." I gave it up when I fell sick with the full mastery I have always had in regard to habits. Now to want the pipe and to find it pleasant was one sign of return to health.

By and by, my pipe being out, I was aware of an odour I had not smelt before. It was another intimation of the keenness of sense I had acquired in the changes brought by convalescence. The scent came and was gone and came again with the low-breathed sweetness of some appealing thing of life seeking to be noticed. Looking about me, I saw a slender vine trailing over the decayed wood beside me. There were small leaflets, and set between them in pairs, delicate, thread-like stems crowned each with a tiny flower, no violet as sweet, fairy vases scattering fragrance like tiny censers swung by the wandering breezes. I smiled at the play of intrusive fancy

so alien to the ways of a hard business man. It was as if the baby imagination had been left on my doorstep, "I am yours," pinned to the sleeve. "Take me in and feed me." If I were to talk this way to my broker between deals at the Club? I broke into a roar of laughter and in the reminding cathedral-like stillness of the solemn green arches of the pines, was silent, aware again of the faint fragrance near to me. I had found, as Mrs. Christian told me later, the twin flower, some weeks ahead of its due season. My book told me later it was the Linnea borealis, found far to the north, a brave little settler, once dear to the botanist whose name it bears. I left it unplucked and went on my way, watchful of things about me with the silence-born mood of the forest where sound of bird or other living creature was rarely heard and only the varied voices of the brook busily hurrying to the great mother sea.

I soon came to where a lesser brook joined the main stream and saw its darker marsh-tinted water meet and mingle with the purity of my guiding stream. Which to follow I consulted my compass and confidently took to the bank of the newly-found brook. Here were spruce, birch, maple, young leafed as yet, brambles, and the poplar best known as the balsam tree. The leaves were dancing in an air so light that it did not stir the other foliage. It was a very little thing, but pleasant to learn why this leafage was so sensitive. Plucking a leaf I saw that where the long leaf stem was joined to the branch and to the leaf,

it was twice as thick as the part between and therefore responsively mobile to the breeze. These leaves deranged by greater winds lie loosely sideways when wet with a look of dejection and, as I saw later, have rough ribbed under faces which are then silvery in the day and at sunset golden.

The guiding water was checked or turned by dead trees and wriggled in and out under and over rocks, not having at all an easy journey. I went on confidingly and then, here was no spring, but my old enemy, the "ma'sh," out of which oozed in abject illegitimate birth that untrustworthy brook.

Now for the compass. There plainly was the north. The instinct of the needle I might trust and there must be the west and my course. I skirted the morass, not without disaster and then, alas, the north had got dislocated and I not located at all. I have deep respect for the man who can usefully employ the compass in a tangled wood. At sea it is simple enough, but with a log here and a big cedar there and bits of absorbent marsh and nets of briars how can a man go straight? I would have returned defeated to my familiar stream but that the compass had lost me.

Then I did what perhaps was best. I set my eye on a far tree and when I reached it on another in line with this. At the close of an hour I saw open sky ahead of me and to my great relief came out on a clearing in which was set a small log cabin.

I sat down and consulted my pipe as to whether

I had not made a reassuring discovery in wood craft. I made the further and more certain discovery that I was tired and hungry as I had not been for a year. This at least was pure instinct. The other was a triumph of intellect. When I related my method to Dodo, he said it would not work on the berry flats north of Christian's, because there were no trees; but the discoverer is always thus treated and Dodo was critical and inclined to defend the quality in which he was my superior.

Walking toward the cabin, I saw no sign of life. Black tree stumps, half burned, stood amid the potato sprouts perhaps an acre or more. There were dutchman pipe vines and Virginia creeper on the house and a well-kept garden of flowers before the door. For these the spring was caring. In the windows were old tomato cans holding for pleasant relief amid the sombreness of the brown cabin logs and the signs of a meagre life, the rich red of geranium flowers.

I knocked at the door which was ajar and again louder. There was no reply. I was curious as to whom the cabin belonged, but all my social training being against intrusion where the owner was absent, I sat down on the squatter's doorstep and waited.

Then there was a brown flash and a hare darted under the log house and hot foot after him my dog Mike. I had left him tied up because of a lame leg and swollen nose reported by Dodo as the results of a

too curious investigation of a nest of yellow jackets, resentful of impertinent curiosity. Mike gave up the hare and came to my feet. Having wagged his tail in glad salute, he lay down and went to sleep. Here was one consolation. Mike was better than a compass and would know the way home, so I waited and walked to the highway near by and then sat down again on the step, wondering if this were Hapworth's home or Cairn's.

About three o'clock, as I stood looking toward the road, a man came around the house, for the door as I had seen to my surprise did not face the road. He was dressed neatly in well-fitting gray, with a gray cap to match and altho his boots were dusty they had been blacked. The clean-shaven face was brown and thin, the features refined, the teeth white, the expression grave.

"Good afternoon," I said. "May I ask if you are Mr. Cairns?"

"No, my name is Hapworth."

"My tenant, I believe. I am Mr. Sherwood."

"Your tenant or not, sir, as you please," he said, very quietly. "I pay what rent that unpleasant agent of yours demands. I can go or stay as you like."

As I had been quite neutral in my statement, I knew no reason why he should have made me this surly return, but the intonations were those of a man of my own class.

I ignored his manner and said, "You like Mr.

Jones no better than I do. I am taking or shall take no rent from the three or four who have made homes on my land, and who I fear have been cheated by my agent."

"As far as I am concerned, I could hardly consent to that. It is as well that you have learned what manner of man you employ."

"I have, but we will discuss our own business later. I am not here to make money."

"Yes. I heard that you have given Mr. Christian his land. There are no better folk. For myself I saw no reason why I should go to see you. I did not mean to call on you. That man Jones is not a fortunate representative."

"I agree with you. I see no reason why you should visit me. You will excuse me just now. I got lost and, if I may have a slice of bread and, if you have it, milk, I shall go on my way."

"Then this was not a deliberate intrusion on the privacy of a stranger."

"No," I said sweetly, "a lamentable accident."

"Indeed." He seemed satisfied. "Ah, wait a moment." He left me standing at his door and did not ask me to come in. He returned presently, brought out a chair and gave me bread, cold ham and milk. He stood quite silent while I satisfied my hunger.

I was sure that my agent, aroused into vigilance, had been of a sudden harsh with my queer tenants after years of careless indulgence or worse. This

and something interesting about Hapworth made me very desirous of atoning to him for any rascality on the part of Jones, concerning whom I had gathered in Belport on my way some informing particulars. Thus minded, I thanked Mr. Hapworth for his hospitality and made clear that when agreeable to him a return visit would be most welcome.

I asked if he would set me on the brookside where the water would be my guide. He went with me to the edge of the forest, walking ahead of me, not speaking at all until in the wood, when he said, "Here is a plain blaze. You need only to follow it. Goodbye," and I, rather surprised, "You must be sure to come soon and return my visit."

He paused and said with curious slowness, "I will endeavor to do so."

"Oh, I shall expect you. When may I look for you? I usually sail before noon."

"No one sets a time here. Time hardly survives the abundance of it in this wild country. I mean," and he smiled, "punctualities are as useless here as in post-mortem countries."

"How do you know they will be absent there?"

"I do not," he said. "I will try to come."

He had half accepted my invitation, but why should he need to try? Why apparently did a thing as simple require effort? To have guided me to the brook was so small a courtesy that the man's personal refinement made the disinclination to go with me the more strange.

I called Mike, but he had left me, and I saw him racing to and fro far away, declining to obey my whistle. Keeping an eye on the blazed trees, I came on my friendly brook. I tried to dismiss from mind my not wholly agreeable visit and to take up again my new game of study of the frolic thing and its charming varieties. It was not to be done. In fact, I observed very often as time ran on that there were fortune-freighted hours when my relation to nature seemed to be easy and others when, as now, no such nearness was attainable. More and more I felt it then and still feel it to be a natural relation, however mysterious. I was to learn in a graver hour that the sense of nearness to the great artist maker was at times such as to fill me with awe and at others such as to seem despairingly absent.

Just now the man I had left was in possession of my thoughts. Then suddenly there came to me out of the tantalizing, unsystematic index, memory, a vague remembrance that I had at some past time seen him. Where and when I could not recall. I kept on making the vain effort we all know. At last, as I came out on the cliff, I gave it up with the belief that before long I should get the clue, which is of course the wiser method of dealing with a lost memory. You advertise for it in the mind and forget it until some honest minute turns up with the lost bit of mental property.

It was six when I got home, rather tired, and found Dodo with his kindly way of personally in-

terested service not at all pleased with me, betrayed as I was by swamp mud and bramble scratches. I had to confess and was duly lectured. But if I had played truant, Mike was in worse case and in unpleasantly plain disgrace.

"That dog, sir—"

"No need to explain. Lift up the tent flies and let the air through—confound the dog. I will dine on the rock. Where is Mike now?"

"Under the waterfall. Hear him."

I did indeed. About once a fortnight, Mike indulged in the strange luxury of killing a skunk. I saw him on one occasion as he let it fall dead. He rubbed his nose on the soil, panted, whined in extreme distress and walked feebly home to take the sure whipping, bath and anointing and to be tied up for two days on low diet far away in the wood. The stench was obviously a cause of suffering, but neither that nor the later punishment and Dodo's rather severe use of the stick did any good. Luckily he kept away from the tents when he came home from these hunts. The skunk odor and the consequences left my joyous comrade, Mike, very meek for some days and indisposed for Dodo's society, but skunk killing was to the end a too fascinating business. He must have "snatched a fearful joy."

April was over and the days of May were bringing warmth, but always with refreshing coolness at night. There was a wonderful stillness in the twilight as I sat on the rock. The sea was one vast quiet-

ness with faint whisperings on the beach and murmurous fall of my brook on the strand. The sunset glow behind the low northwest headland of the bay and the side falling sunshine of the fading day made the calm ocean a plain of orange light with shifting purples over the shoals near shore; and now it was darker, the white wing flash of gulls gone home to some far loneliness of island rocks; and now it was night.

For the first time since I came hither an uplifting sense of thankfulness grew upon me. I was self-assured that I would get well, almost that I was well, and how sweet was this stillness and how much of such fertility of happiness my former life had ignorantly missed. I had dreaded the solitude, and the entire absence of laborious days. Pure idleness I could not have endured. I had yet to learn that the best rest for a tired mind is the employment of hitherto unemployed mental faculties. These I was rediscovering and setting to work. I was to go far on this voyage of discovery, back to days of a return in nobler forms of the unfettered use of my imagination.

At last I got up, the sea a black gulf far below me, the stars coming out one by one like the many shining things which the darkness of my disease had brought me. I smiled as I went up to my tent, reflecting on this bit of fancy so far from anything my life at home could have given me.

For the second time it occurred to me to write the letters which I knew at least two or three per-

sons would expect. Yes, the doctor, my cousin. I wrote:

My dear Harry:—I am so incredibly better that I am tempted to say I am well, except that you would not believe me. That pack of devils you call symptoms have folded their tents like the Arabs and gone to seek other spoil and other victims. I have not the ghost of a symptom left. Sad, isn't it?—a defeat of all predictions. I presume that little tubercular swarm of fiends has gone to play the devil elsewhere, or is still there, somehow quarantined.

This is my life—up at dawn, a dip in the cold sea, 56° Fahrenheit, and a fresh water douche in a brook I own; back to bed, sleep till awakened for breakfast a hungry man. Then a sail or a canoe paddle if the sea has no symptoms and is quiet; lunch, a walk in the wood where having been lost three times I am learning how to find my way. I am being devoluted and revoluted and acquiring primitive arts of self-preservation much needed, since, except for Dodo, I was for a time as helpless in the woods as a turtle on his back and a turtle too with symptoms.

I am reminded that you and Euphemia promised me a visit. Come soon. I set no date on this letter for. I do not know what day of the month it is, nor if it be Monday or Tuesday. Pardon my delay in writing. I left my social conscience at home.

Yours,

JOHN SHERWOOD.

Camp Retreat.

I put off writing to my one woman friend, my cousin Euphemia, because of the mail Dodo had

brought. There were some seven letters pleading for "causes." I loathe the very name of this form of charitable plunder. The other letters were on business and vexed me. What had I to do with business? I wanted to be let alone and so made short work of these reminders of my past. Newspapers I had forbidden. The war had left me long ago with a horror of them.

I went to bed, telling Dodo to take word to Tom that I would go out with him to his fishing ground in the morning about eight if the tide and the weather served. Neither did, it seemed. The weather was gray and the ocean turbulent. I decided at all events on a talk with Tom and went away for a mile walk over the beach in a waterproof coat, the rain soon falling heavily. A violent southeast gale drove the sea in charging ranks of mounded billows on the shore, tearing off their crests in long white level plumes of spray as they rose. A clatter of rattling pebbles followed. The roar of elate triumph in this thunderous tumult pleased me. The crush of the huge billows and their crash of defeat gave me a vague sense of pity. I liked my personal battle with the rage of the elements and the feeling of competent vigor.

Then at last I heard, "Halloa! You be goin' by me, ain't you?" I was, but now looking up I saw a man at a log cabin door just within the shelter of the woods. I turned from the shore and went up the bank. "Come in," he said. I entered and

he closed the door while I threw off my waterproof coat.

"Mr. Sherwood, I guess. If Jones is right, you're a-temptin' Providence. It 's a skatherin kind of a day."

What the deuce, thought I, is a skatherin day? I was to find that this lonely man had an inventive talent for words.

I said, "What did Jones say of me?"

"Oh, that man. He said you was half dead and he guessed these pines would be for sale pretty soon."

"Will they, indeed? Damn Jones."

"Well, now I see you, he don't seem to me not even one of them minor prophets our preacher down to Belport talks 'bout."

"No, I am well. I was not, but this open-air life has set me up. Out-of-doors is a fine doctor."

"Cold, are you?"

"Rather."

"Hold on. I 'll make a fire." While he set about it, I took a good look at him, a tall, round-shouldered hardy man, with a freckled face of deep brown, large yellow teeth, a gray-bearded visage with nearly shut eyes, and clad in what he called "ilers." The blaze was agreeable and we sat by it and talked.

"Are you one of my tenants," I asked.

"No, *sir*. Own my own land just round the bight of the bay, got shore fishing rights like anyone."

"Any luck this spring?"

"Well, fish is like humans. They will to-day and

to-morrow they won't. They 're terrifical unsure. Like to go out with me sometime?''

''I would. I see on my chart that out to sea there are some islands. Do you go that far?''

''Yes, Cod Rock and Lonesome Ledge. Queer place that. No one lives there, tho' it 's good for fish, and there 's Gull Rock, which it isn 't just a rock, but reefs and a big woodsy island, mostly scragged pines.''

''Lonesome Ledge, why do they call it that?''

''No one lives there. Tried it once, but no man can 't sleep on that there island. It 's the best for fish. It ain't a ledge tho' they named it so.''

''I should like to try a night there.''

''You can. Not me. It 's a mournsome place.''

I had heard of haunted houses but an island where a man was doomed to lie awake amused me. I fell to thinking of how the belief had been created and presently hatched a theory I kept to myself. Volunteered talk was not much in Dagett's line, having on the great sea he frequented no chances for exercise of speech.

''Have you any family, Mr. Dagett?''

''I think I answer better to the name of Tom. Don't mind of being mistered these years back. Concernin' family, I have three and my wife.''

''Quite a heavy charge that on a business as uncertain as yours.''

''Ain't no charge,'' he said quietly. ''They 're all dead these three years.''

I took quick thought what reply to make to this unequalled statement. I elected the more commonplace. "A sad loss, Tom."

"That 's as may be, considering they was all a sickly lot. I 'm settled to the notion they 're better off. Will you be wantin' fish of me and lobsters?"

Relieved by this diversion of the talk, I said yes, and that Dodo would come for them twice a week and I must see those islands. With this I faced the storm again, wondering as I went, about this little by-place of odd people.

Tom, as I left him, said it was ornery weather and flustery. I treasured his queer words, and above all "mournsome," and went away with attention to the vast mounds of water which, now that the tide was up, were at times charged with danger. At last a great wave made me leap away but caught Mike and upset him. The surf and the great wind drove me sidling and crouching up the shore. Mike was rolled over and over. When he recovered possession of his legs, he looked about for some explanation of this insult and finding none fled up the beach and into the forest where I had no mind to follow, having myself a stern joy in my contest with the elements.

The immense amount of noise struck me. The thunderous roar of these miles of high-flung bounding waters as they fell and fell would alone have been wonderful to hear, for me at least, to whom the open sea was unknown until now. The wind beating sounds out of the pines was now gentle and now a furious

charge with never long the same response. It changed from moment to moment and became at times low, almost mellow, or again shrill, sharp and then not a sound. This was all a matter of tall pines. As I came to know later, the deciduous forests have other voices when the wind is on the war-path, with challenge of their vigor, and their cry in the norther like enough to be a death song if any of them stood alone. Then they make murmurous moan, soft, long, or like a breathless wail of pain. In fact, near the sea the mass of the surrounding pines alone saved them, for here was no inland shelter. There was on the shore a granite boulder ten feet high where gasping I took shelter and waited, longing to have some musical recognition of certain distinct notes of this wild orchestra, at times only a monstrous unaccordant mob of noises. When I climbed the rocks, I staggered to my tent and gladly dropped on the lounge.

Dodo had got back and had set heavy logs between the tent pins and the canvas and lifted it at the back to let the wind through. But for this, the tents would have been in the skies, or in the woods.

"I was sure you should n't have gone," said Dodo. In fact, he had warned me, but I laughed out my recalled joy in this ultimate test of my endurance and retired to the warm log kitchen to change my clothes.

The rain was over and the wind, which fell away at sunset, soon dried the tents. The chipmunks that night retired to drier quarters. During my first

nights, they extemporized a wild circus all over the tent canvas, until I discovered that if Mike slept in my tent, they left me in peace. As Mike slept the sleep of the canine just, it must have been the dog odor which thus routed them.

I sat in tired comfort and made notes—Chipmunks, queer little monks they, or chipmuk, the dictionaries say. I am getting curious in the matter of words, one of my many enlargements of interest. "Skatherin" I give up, but "mournsome," heard on the lakes, as I discovered later, is worthy of promotion to a place in the dictionaries where as yet it is not, nor woodsy for wooded. Twin flower I find, Linnea borealis, boreal I supposed because of its habitat. A marginal note of an after year says: Linnæus' wife was oddly named Boreala. Queer, if true. Then I went to bed, which I had as well have done sooner, and slept, with some faint previous thinking of that island where no man can sleep.

The days ran on with a pretty regular routine, much as described in my letter to my doctor and, in spite of occasional lapses into old symptoms, my gain in weight, strength and what Carlyle called, eupeptic conditions, soon relieved me of all thought of my bodily state.

Meanwhile, Dodo went and came to and from the Christians with eggs, amazingly good butter, chickens and milk, but Mrs. Christian did not come again nor had Hapworth called to return my involuntary visit. About him I was not only curious, but still haunted

by the idea that somewhere I had seen him. The Christians were more obvious people. One sunny morning in May Mrs. Christian did appear after breakfast, rosy and smiling, with doughnuts and a dried apple pie.

"I 've fetched your books," she said. "I did n't care much for that man Byron. Seemed he was out of humor with the world and himself too. But that other book, "Cranford," why, you just seem to know those people. There are folks down Belport way just like them. Must have been real."

"They were," I said, "or some of them."

"I guessed no one could have invented them. Why, do you know, there 's a Major Brown at Belport, only he has an e to his name. He lost an arm at Antietam and when he heard it was in a glass jar in the museum, he went and got a letter from Lincoln that he was to have it and get it decently buried. Well, seeing that he had reinlisted the doctors told him the whole of him was government property till his term was over. He was that mad, for he 'd had a gravestone set up in the cemetery to be over the arm."

"Indeed," I was enjoying it. "And he put on it an inscription?"

"He did. 'Here lies the arm of Major Browne, abiding the time for to come when the Lord is of a mind to take the rest of him.' "

"Did he ever get it?"

"No, he 's been writing letters about it ever since."

"That 's a good story, Mrs. Christian."

"I knew you 'd like it. How stout you 're getting, Mr. Sherwood."

I knew it and what it meant.

"More books? suppose we try a novel."

I chose Rob Roy and she went away with a bunch of bananas and a basket of oranges.

A week later she returned the book, saying, "No more novels for me. I just sat up with it, till next morning I was so sleepy I could hardly get Peter's breakfast, and there 's lots to do and I 'll just bide a while before I have another. Good-bye. Have you seen Hapworth again?"

"No."

"Said he was thinking to come. Does seem to take a heap of time over a simple bit of a think like that. What about Cairns, sir? He 's another queer one. He 'll come, I guess."

"Well, I can wait. Good-bye. Come soon again."

The weather was cold and rainy without much wind for quite a week in mid May, and not pleasant for sailing or for walking in the forest. I got exercise at this time in the shelter of the long stretch of reef by learning to use the canoe, a light paper built boat, in which later I took much pleasure. I had one upset, by good hap near shore. The use of the paddle and of secure balance in this frailest of crafts are not to be had without much practice.

I began after my upset to devise a canoe that was unupsetable. This use of invented words comes of

want of education, but why this despotism of the dictionary? Unupsetable must stand. My one talent had been mechanical invention and now the old year-long habit got grip of me and I took my baby idea to sleep with me, worked with it, played with it, and fed it with incessant thought, for only in this delirium of industry does the inventor get his victories. For him a factory, any factory, with its rhythmic mechanism is a delight. He is the poet of motion and knows that no machine which does not sing true to his ear is to have long life. I think I said this before.

Two days of such thought found me losing sleep and I let it drop in alarm and accepted the malicious freaks of the unimproved canoe, which I soon learned to handle with expertness. After all, a boat without caprice, I comfortably reflected, would be like a woman without—well, I know not what.

Reading and my notebook helped me through the wet weather and at last I felt like writing to Euphemia. This lady, my near friend and cousin, now a well-preserved woman over fifty years of age, was a more and more devout Roman Catholic. I had been able, as I have said, to make her entirely comfortable by a gift of enough money to put her at such ease as had been sadly wanting in other days. It was the only large gift, except that made to Penryn, which I remember as having given me distinct pleasure. I gave and usually thought little of the object. Euphemia was now an eager and wide reader, with a

too emotional interest in people and an ardent desire to interfere in their doings. She had a dominative spiritual temperament, enjoying like many people of her type the mystical and, like some very religious people, was without alert sense of humor, despite her own rarely used talent for mimicry.

Dear Cousin Euphemia:

I am making, as I told you, a *Retreat.* My spiritual advisers are wood and ocean, and I do assure you they are good for me, soul and body. I am well again, and as concerns my soul, far nearer to grave thought than when that blessed M. D., our cousin, made death seem to me so imminent, and I recoiled from it with the horror of a man unused to defeat. Never was I less religious than when I gathered from my medical judge that I was sentenced to possibly slow decay and death. Abominable doctrine that, you will say. For me, my dear Euphemia, such new and untroubled communion with nature in its many moods as has here been mine, has been more spiritually useful than any of the few sermons I have ever heard, and I might go further. You will say this is not religion and that there is but one way to God, the church, your church. I do not so read God's dealings with man, or with the tribes of man in their varied grades of civilization. Do not be shocked if I say that it is necessary to attribute common sense to the ruler of the world. With this in mind, I cannot believe that any creed given to man was meant to escape evolutionary change. Neither nature nor religion is free from the rule of this law. I had not meant to lecture you or invite you to read between the lines what in thoughtful hours I may think of your church

and its incessant feeding of man with needless mysteries. In my present surroundings religion seems to become simple, nor can I here avoid belief in my immediate responsibility to the Maker without need of the authoritative intermediation of a church. But a man is himself and his creed and thus no serious person in or out of a church is really the absolute slave of his accepted beliefs, not even if he decide to think he is. I hear you exclaim, "Good gracious, John, what nonsense!"

I did not mean to write about that of which I never talk, but it may serve to let you know that I am acquiring new subjects of thought, and rest sure after this that you will be my only confessor. I wonder whether men at least would not on the whole confess more easily to woman. Let the naughty part of me confess to the better part, Conscience. But here I am off again. No more of that.

I hear Dodo calling—I have just been out on my rock to look at something, a rocket, I judge, and then another. This coast is a death trap. We listened and looked, but saw nor heard anything more. Dodo thought that she—a ship—may have weathered the cape to north and found a refuge. I do not know. A gale is rising and now and then there is a fierce gust of wind and a sound like a brief wail from my pines of the many voices.

I have been thinking about women, all along of a limping novel. When again I write, I may air my opinions of your sex with the liberty of inexperience. Let us laugh at them a little, for they have their revenge when we marry. So far I have escaped the Comedy, the *lever de rideau,* which precedes the tragedy of domestic life. I have here the only real insurance against the accident called marriage, that is, entire absence of women. But

then as a warning there is the classical case of Adam. I ought to touch wood. I do. Good night.

Yours,

J. S.

This set me to thinking. I should like to know Euphemia's honest opinion of women. I learned of later years that what the married and the elect maidens think of women singularly differs. I had known them in their variety, but work is a stern enemy of the sex, and why think of them now at all, or of a double dozen of subjects which never before had for me any interest? I seemed to be exercising a limitless mental hospitality, which reminds me, I know not why, to order a good telescope.

A morning of May—why is that such a pretty name?—was faultless, sky and ocean blue, azure, we say, an Arabian word. Why more expressive than blue? Our vocabulary of colour seems to be meagre and one must resort to comparatives such as orange, violet, indigo, etc. I wonder if savage people have our color sense or more words for tints.

I told Dodo we would go together and see my unsocial squatters and ask lunch of Mrs. Christian. In fact, I was hungry for exercise. It was nine when we left, with Mike hilariously barking.

We left the brook and Dodo went on ahead slowly as I insisted, to give me leisure to look about me, for I was learning to enjoy the pleasure of simple observation unaided by science or explanatory wisdom.

Dodo went without apparent care a course of his own, I in loitering mood, now companioned by fancy, now by rather lazy reason.

I asked Dodo how he knew the way. He reckoned it was just the same way Mike knew to go. This was conclusive. Then I asked where was the north. He had it as correct as my compass. I said, "The moss seems to be mostly on the north side of the trees." Dodo did not know, had n't noticed that, nor did he appear capable of this kind of observation.

The beauty of the trunks of the white birch caught my eye and the grays and greens, like some mottled snakeskin, of the striped maple. Presently we came on to spruce, fragrant after the rain, but in fact there were divers odors of earth and others of unknown product, a mingling as in some of the popular artificial perfumes. I observed at a later time that, after a soaking rain, especially at dusk of day, these wood smells are more distinct, on which, if I were a poet, I could say things of note, but when a man has imagination and can not speak its language he had better enjoy its silence. Storm and rage of great waters, flaming, far-flung firebrands from the cloud battlements of heaven I have seen here and felt how more neighboured I grew to Him of whom were these measureless energies, arch demons of deathful power and still aglow with the arch-angelic splendor. I have longed to set it all in words, yearned for the poet's power, the mind pregnant of a thing never to be born, vain longings felt of many. I

smiled as I thought of the impropriety of anyone but a poet king dancing for joy of what the unnamable One has given.

Such thoughts came and went through my mind with bird-like quickness of flight as I strode after Dodo, until we came on the marsh. Here at this time I first saw the pitcher plant, with its tall stem, not yet flower crowned, and below the graceful green vase with an appetite for animal diet, as I learned later. I got Dodo to fill a basket with it and the marsh soil. On my return, I set it out near the tent in a bowl where I discovered in the wet earth the sundew, with its luring trap for insects, which led me to send for books on the lives and ways of plants. The pain-inflicting habits of animals are strange enough, but some of the feeding methods of the vegetable world appear needlessly cruel. I saw long after this in a hothouse a tall tropical pitcher plant armed at top with two sharp thorns. When the lesser creatures, like little mice, try to enter the cup and plunder for food the accumulated dead insects within, they get impaled on the thorns and rotting, fall in, adding to the food stores of the greedy Saracenia. I concluded that I would not bother my head with this difficulty about merciless nature and a merciful God. My own suffering had been a friend to me, but for my trapped, tortured mouse—what is there to say?

At the marsh Dodo struck off to the right and very soon we came out on Christian's clearing.

Mrs. Christian was pinning a variety of garments

on clothes lines, aided by a stout rosy girl of eighteen. As I watched her a moment unseen, I saw how graceful were her movements. The girl was more the mother's child. Both were singing with evident pleasure, the words heard with distinctness, as is rarely the case with the greater trained voices. Mike barking, to my regret, spoilt the pretty picture, and the song—or was it a hymn, ceased.

"Good gracious, Mr. Sherwood," cried Mrs. Christian, "now you have ketched me—and not fit to be seen. Come in. Peter's gone to Belport to tell the major no more chickens for him. What between you and Hapworth, we are like to run short of fowls."

Dodo set down his basket and went away to inspect chickens for a choice and the girl passed into the house.

"Your girl sings well," I said.

"Lord's sake, don't tell her! She 's that set up about it. Mr. Hapworth told her it was something out of the common."

"It is. What were you singing, a hymn?"

"Oh, a kind of. Mr. Hapworth fetched it one day and sang it too. I guess he made it up himself. It 's about saying prayers lying down in bed. Now that is a queer idea, is n't it, sir?"

I said, "Yes, perhaps," and had thus a fresh light on Hapworth.

"I have written it down. Like to see it?"

I did and, pleased with it, made a copy in my note-

book. I was going, I said, to see Hapworth and Cairns, and would she give me lunch on our way back? As we went out, she saw the basket of marsh mud and said, "Oh, you 've got the side saddle plants," and kneeling to look at them, "here 's the sundew. He 's a greedy one, too."

"Sundew," I commented. "What a pretty name!"

Later I observed that when the sun was hot, little drops like dew came out on the leaves and this may explain the pretty name, sundew. I wondered what observant peasant thus christened it.

Leaving Dodo to wait for me, I whistled to Mike and took to the lonely wood road which led to Hapworth's and to Cairns, on the highway to Belport.

As I had said, there was significance in the fact that Hapworth's cabin was set with its back to the road, nor was there a gate. To enter the rude clearing, one must climb the snake fence. Passing around to the front, I went through the only part of the land which showed care in a very well-kept garden now responding to the Maytime sun. Mike, who had no manners, but a generally distributed amiability, bounded barking through the open door. There was no escape for my unwilling host.

"Ah, Mr. Sherwood," he said, rising from a writing-table, "come in, or do you like better the sun outside?"

I was too curious to accept what I fancied he desired and saying, "No, I am too warm now," went in and took the proffered chair.

"This time," I said, "I have come on a visit to a neighbor, not to a tenant. I have been hoping for a visit from you."

"The weather has been bad." Then he paused long enough to make the interval of silence seem strange and said, with deliberate slowness, "The fact is, Mr. Sherwood, to be frank, I came to this place for a purpose and to get away from my kind. The why is no man's business but my own. You are my landlord and I pay my rent. Your kindly persistent wish to know me is, I am sure, well meant, but as on the whole I am desirous to secure, perhaps for years, a retreat from the world I knew, you must pardon my insisting on my right to be undisturbed!"

It was oddly formal and deliberate and not very pleasant. I rose at once, annoyed for a moment at him and then at myself for not having acted on the previous distinct evidence of the man's wish for a solitary life.

I said quietly, "You are quite right and I should have respected your wish. You will pardon me, I am sure. The fact is, I, too, am making a Retreat."

"Did I say I was making a Retreat?" He showed some anxiety.

"Yes, or to that effect. Mine has been very successful. Permit me to hope that yours has been."

"That is between me and my God. I do not know. May I offer you anything?"

"A little water for my dog."

"Certainly."

While he was outside at the well, I took note of the couple of hundred books, the brass firedogs, the table with a silver inkstand, a desk and the general order and neatness. I longed to look at his books, but of course did not and was sorry I had gotten his verse.

In a minute or two, I met him at the door and saying good-bye, turned to go when he said a singular thing. "After all, Mr. Sherwood, a man has a right to refuse to another the hospitality of access to his mind."

"Each to his cell, then," I cried, laughing, "but other forms of hospitality being still possible, I am always at your service."

"Very neatly answered, Mr. Sherwood," and now he was smiling. "We will part as did Hamlet from his friends, 'Every man to his business.'" Then he added gravely, "And the rest of it, the rest."

With a kind word and, thinking over the remainder of his quotation, I went away along the road. Here was a strange find in this wilderness, a gentleman clearly, educated, yes, with a certain oddness, something strikingly uncommonplace and no business of mine.

"Come, Mike. You are a born tramp."

Then I stood still. "Retreat"—I had it, but why not before? These disassociations and reassociations of memory, how wonderful they are. I had my man. His name was Benedict Norman, the surname never given to a child in this country since

Benedict Arnold's infamy. He was a clergyman of my own nominal church who long ago had asked help for one of my workmen, ill and of course out of work. My head clerk had seen him and brought me his request with his name. It had struck me as unusual. I gave the desired aid, but although I saw him once or twice, near the works, we had never spoken. This was quite four years ago or more. He must be about my age. When I first heard of him he had a small parish near my foundry in the country. Had he recognized me? I was sure he had not and that was not strange.

I lunched liberally with Mrs. Christian and her shy, handsome girl and went home without seeing the volunteer tenant, Cairns, who would neither pay rent, said Jones, nor go to see his landlord. Surely I was in relation with rare specimens of man eccentric or possibly only so unlike the average man as to be unwilling to live with him and desiring seclusion on account of some of the hurts of life, an animal habit with an instinctive basis. Mike exemplified it when, after misbehavior, he had been punished.

My own desire for a lonely corner had been satisfied. When I regained my health, I should have been once more the man I was, with fixed habits and impatient, mild contempt for the lame ducks, the incapables, the unusable people; a want of charity that, Euphemia said. I replied that she had it for two and that I was doing enough if I supplied

her with money to run her church charities and help the folks that could but would not, or would but could not. Now I had somehow shed my indifference concerning social freaks and my distrust of people who had lost the herding instinct. I had begun to entertain charitable reasons for the desire of others than I to secure the monastic seclusion of loneliness.

Here were three strange characters, including the fisherman, who too must be what people call a character, and content to live alone. When Dodo, with his customary frankness, had asked Tom Dagett why he did n't get married again, Tom had replied by asking him if he were married. Dodo said he had tried it twice and both were dead; to which Tom, with a grim smile, said he 'd been smart enough to find out one was all he wanted and now he did guess he and her both were better off, for she was in heaven and, with a grin, he himself was not, and hoped he had a little time left. The inference was not missed by Dodo.

When I mentioned it to Mrs. Christian, she said: "They were just about near to getting apart on earth." And then, after a reflective pause, "Fact is, Mr. Sherwood, that woman could n't cook. If more women knew how to cook, there would n't be so many divorces. Beauty 's a thing don't stand against time and weather, but right good cooking does, and so I tell Susan. Sour bread will spoil any marriage, Mr. Sherwood. It goes with sour children and a sour husband."

IX

AT home I would not have had the least curiosity concerning the man who was Norman and chose to play hermit and call himself Hapworth. I would have dismissed him with the label, Krank, with a K, which a writer has proposed as not being so disrespectful to an honest piece of mechanism, the Crank.

Now I had become interested to know more of my tenant. That night I wrote to Euphemia to inquire about the Rev. Benedict Norman, but said nothing of his being a neighbor. Euphemia always sturdily denied a love of gossip but would, I was sure, find out for me all I desired to know and be very eager to learn why I had any interest in the clergyman.

For a while, I failed to hear more of my human neighbors and took to sailing the catboat with Dodo and Mike, my sailor servant insisting upon my learning to handle the boat before I ventured far from home. I soon became expert in sailing and at last proposed that we run out to Lonesome Ledge, taking Tom and towing his light fishing dory.

When I said that I meant to sleep there, Dodo, who accepted all my whims and knew nothing of the island's bad name, thought he would run over with Tom and take a tent and blankets. Tom made no

comment except that folks from town had queer ways, but he would go of course. Dodo accordingly sailed with Tom and came back smelling vilely of fish, having pitched a small unused tent for me.

We set sail at noon of a very warm and brilliant May day, Tom, Dodo, Mike and I, and ran straight out to sea with a fresh wind from the northwest. About five, we anchored in the lee of the island, set Dodo ashore and had a prosperous take of cod, haddock and rock flounders.

Then I declared that I meant to spend the night here alone with Mike and they would return for me next morning. Dodo was rebellious and said we were going to have a storm, but when I persisted and Tom laughed at the idea of a storm, Dodo silently provided for my comfort and, very cross, sailed away with Dagett, who being by this time sure of being well paid for all services, wished me a good night and grinning would be back early next day.

I had my way and was pleased with being marooned. The island was about two or three acres, chiefly ruddy granite rocks, twenty to sixty feet high. To southeast was a beach and outside a curved reef. My survey was brief and without interest except that between two rocks lay the crushed wreckage of an ancient sloop, festooned with green seaweeds, which rose and fell with the waves as they ran into the dark hold and out again, white and hurried. The bow was high up and two seaworn gray blocks swung over the side, not unlike, oh, very like, skulls.

I lighted my pipe and sat wondering if anyone had escaped from the wreck and if so, how long they waited for human help. Mike wandered and came and went and at last gave up a futile search for game and fell asleep at my feet.

I was pleased to have come, liking my entire isolation and realizing again in this sea-guarded solitude that strange sense of nearness to God, which is rarely to be had in the busy life of cities, and is the priceless gift of nature's most generous hours. It was worth while to have come for this alone. I made no effort at self-analysis; had indeed no desire to find an explanation of what was a voice from the soul with ever for me the sense of that mystery of peace which is past understanding and therefore remote from the cold explanations of reason.

I called Mike as the night came and went up to the higher level, where were some scrub oaks and a dozen bewildered pines storm-bent and stunted. The sky was darkly clear, the stars brilliant, the waves monotonously breaking. I undressed in the tent and was glad of the warmth of my blankets.

I was to go to sleep. I smiled at Tom's legend. I thought that if I did not sleep it would be because I was obsessed by his belief. That was too absurd to be entertained for a moment.

I put it aside and began to recall what my doctor has said of what he called the *præ dormitium,* that clouding interval between being awake and asleep, a time when the sentinel senses go off guard, one by

one, and at last we pass into the world of slumber. No man has full knowledge of that passage. I lay awake and having in this interval, as have many up to middle life, power to see what they will, or perhaps what they will not to see, I beheld unendingly the blocks, like skulls, swinging over the wreckage. I kept on seeing them.

At last I got up and struck my repeater watch. It was past eleven. I took a look at the sky, which was darkening with a scurry of clouds from the southeast. The wind blew in gusts, no steadification in it, as Tom would have said. Mike was gone. I whistled and he was again at my feet. He too was sleepless. I went back to bed and lay awake, hearing the canvas flap and the tent ropes hum in the rising gale. Outside Mike sat up and howled like a possessed thing. At last he came into the tent. I soothed him, but he was shivering with cold so that I bade him lie down and cast a fold of my blanket over him. Even then he moved uneasily, but slept no more than I, who felt that the storm quite sufficiently explained my insomnia. It was blowing furiously. Aware that I must do something to secure the tent, I sat up. A moment later the tent was in air and I saw it, sailing kite-like, to leeward, a gray blur and then gone.

It had begun to rain, a good steady downfall. I dressed in haste, wrapped the blankets about me and was soon wet to the skin. Both Mike and I had a horrible night. I walked, smoked and lay down, wet

as I was, wondering if my little tubercle would find in my condition an ally.

The morning broke in radiance of scarlet to eastward. The rain ceased, but the wind blew with increasing violence, hurling the spray some sixty feet high over the rocks. I was in for an unexpected stay, but the wind and the sun soon dried me, as I ran to and fro, or stopped to share my wet provisions with Mike. I was too disgustingly uncomfortable to admire the waterworks and could do no more than smoke and wait. About three P. M. Dodo and Tom appeared and, with much trouble, the wind failing, made a landing and got me off the island.

"Said it would storm, sir," said Dodo. He was anxious and then, as usual, cross.

Tom, at the helm, was silent, but at last remarked in a casual way, "Get any sleep?"

"No," I said. "Who could, in that gale?"

" 'Twas n't the gale," said Tom. "Tell you some day. Look out for the boom, sir; got to get about."

We were out of it at last. At home, well chidden, I was put to bed with hot bottles and a cup of hotter cocoa, treated in fact like a very naughty child. To my surprise, there were no bad results, but I was cured of desire to repeat my experiment, although still very curious to hear Tom's theory. I have always had an eager will to know all of a matter and a certain patient urgency to end things, a mechanical problem or a large business affair.

This habitual desire was now continually teasing

me about small matters, such as in my old city days would have had for me no least interest. I seemed also to have come into an enlarging inheritance of the lesser pleasures. To discover the first white violet and to find that it had perfume such as the yellow and purple violets have not was a memorable event.

If Dodo had had his way, I would have been in bed for a week. In truth, I felt the better, the more self-assured for my tussle with the storm on Lonesome Ledge. I had never been an invalid, but at home I had been fast becoming in*val*id (a queer language our English, a change of accent and we have two words, though spelled alike). The day after my sleepless night, I humored Dodo, but next morning, as I slept always with the tent open on all sides, the gray dawn as usual called me. An acquaintance of mine says the young age into fatigue as the day goes on to its close, but the aged get up old and grow younger all day. As I never was old I could not confirm this, but I do know that the sudden escape from the oppression of disease into the liberty of the do-as-you-please country, makes it almost worth while to have been in the bondage of the doctor, which is in fact to be aged.

I was up and out on the cliff in a moment. I smiled at my fancy that the sea was tired after the storm, for never again did I see it so calm. As the light grew, for the first time I was struck with the wonderful stillness of this tremendous spectacle of a

sunrise. To-day it was simple, in a way, a vast glow of scarlet light in the sky and on the sea a level scarlet reflex. It gave me a quite new feeling, something akin to awe, for in fact sensitiveness to color was one of the gains this wild-wood life had given me, or was it not a novel gift but the use of a hitherto neglected capacity?

I went down to the beach and lay on the shore. The ocean plain was motionless. It is never really altogether moveless at the shore line. The vast lifeful thing throbbed noiseless in little waves on the beach. The great tides seemed to me 'huge breathings of the sea's immensity' and this faint note of the little waves like the heart beats of the slumbering monster. Again I had the hopeless yearning to put my thought in verse as I lay in the gold of the risen sun. Would such a power reveal to me more than these reveries told? I recalled a favorite quotation of Euphemia, "La poesie ne doit pas tout dire, mais peut tout rever." Ah, if then I can but only dream, I may be as near the soul of things as ever the poet can be. He too has his defects. It was consoling.

A plunge into the sea dismissed the poetry and with that deep gasp of chest-filling respiration a cool dip causes, I ran away up the cliff to get a rough rub and dry myself and then to cuddle up in my bed and sleep.

Dodo, pleased that I had slept so long, awoke me at eight and guessed I might get up if I was careful.

Still curious about that Lonesome Ledge, I walked alone up the beach at evening and found Tom mending a lobster pot.

"Well, Tom," I said, "what of that island where no man can sleep? I certainly did not, nor my dog Mike. I have brought you some tobacco."

"And I was just out of it. Well, Mr. Sherwood, this is what my grandfather told me. Way off in those French days afore our folk took Louisberg, some fishermen got blowed down this way and wrecked on Lonesome Ledge. There was two brothers come ashore alive and afore the shallop smashed they got out of it victuals and water to last a week. When it was nigh all done they fell to despairin' and the older one said to draw lots which should die and leave the other a chance to bide, else both would die sure. Fell out the elder got the death lot. He just ran down and leapt off the big rock. End of him. The other ate and drank till all was gone. Some of our cod boats going south saw a wild man stumbling round on that bit of beach. They ran in to help him. He died 'fore they could get him aboard, but he did tell them all about it and said he was a murderer, which I don't see nohow. They buried him up on the hill. The storms leveled what mound they set over him and when Dodo he put up your tent I kind of did suspicion it was best not to tell you you was goin' to lie right over that dead man. You did, sure enough. I 've knowed two men tried to sleep there. They did n't sleep and you did n't

and the dog did n't. Like to try it again, sir?'' Tom grinned.

''No. I should n't like to spoil a good story.''

''It won't spile,'' said Tom.

We talked fish and went up to Tom's cabin to see a gun I had bought for him, after which I walked home, reflecting on Lonesome Ledge. It was easy to explain the sleeplessness of the first man who had tried to sleep there, knowing of the story of the brothers. I confessed to myself that I was pleased not to have been aware beforehand of my under neighbor, the dead fisherman.

Thus the days ran on into June, with books, fishing, sailing and visits from Mrs. Christian. She was very intelligent and kindly, oddly humorous company. She told me Hapworth came daily for milk and chickens and had learned at last to make bread for himself. Of a Sunday, she said, that every week he would come and read prayers, to which came always Cairns, with whom he was at ease and of whom Mrs. Christian talked less freely. Reading prayers out of a book did not have her approval. It was like one hen getting another hen to lay eggs for her, on which I broke into great laughter.

''At least,'' I said, ''the hen would know what the egg would be, but what another man prays for you may not suit you at all.''

She said, ''That 's so. Ought to hear Deacon Dagett—that 's Tom's cousin. It 's mighty informing, but I guess the Lord does n't need quite so much

information. Concerning prayer, if we ask what 's fit for us, we get it, and if we ask what 's not fit, we don't and that 's the whole of that business." Then she paused and added, "No, that is n't all. Seems to me right honest praying out loud by yourself sort of talks you out of the world. I 've found it relieving when things are crooked. I don't seem to explain myself. Now I must go. You have n't been to the spring yet, so Dodo says."

"No, I really have been too busy. I must see it."

When Christian came, which was mercifully rare, he sat silent for the most part with the countryman's utter disregard of time. For the rest, I received few letters and was let alone by my small world. Meanwhile, I got Dodo to blaze two or three path trails through the woods and, thus assured of safety, I wandered daily, taking note of the flowers of June.

One or two of these lonely walks were memorable. On June twelfth I remembered that, as Mrs. Christian reminded me, I had never yet seen the great spring. I set out to find it. I knew now that I had only to follow the brook to its main source. I called Mike and went up the stream. The brook seemed to have no mind to go straight to its ocean home. Why it wandered, like Mike, in this loafing, leisurely way, was not plain to me. It had no name, by good luck, or it might have been labelled Jones Run or the like. On my survey plan I christened it after a baby of a river with the nice Saxon name of the Wandle, found by the happiest fortune on a

map of England, I think near Carshalton. Wandle it was and is, a hither and thither tramp on no business bent. It was kind to me this June morning, for here was my first sight of the marsh marigolds. They were in little groups, gallant, glorious, golden, in the water or on the margin; now they were under the waves and tossed about and then with quick upleap shaking themselves free with a look of alert volition—of liking this pretty play of gay tussle with their capturer of a moment.

I sat and looked and at last laughed outright. Were they really marigolds or more happily merry golds? Who gave what the botanists call the common names to the wild flowers? What is the history of these names? If they were English peasant names, our laborer of to-day has lost the poetic ingenuity which gave to England the delightful names so clearly sweet to Shakespeare's memories of his boyhood. We have been less happy. I recall only the Quaker lady and then, alas, skunk cabbage and fireweed, golden-rod, Indian pipe and cat-tails, perhaps, too, gold thread, and there may be others.

I went on thinking and had in a minute a small and very different adventure. I saw the back of a large bird's head just over a fallen tree. It was a big hawk busily eating, as it proved, the young hare he had caught. I stood moveless for quite a minute, but he must have smelled me, for he could neither have seen nor heard me. Of a sudden he was up and away, not in a lateral flight but, to my amaze-

ment, in a straight, directly perpendicular rise of such power as broke leaves and twigs from the trees overhead. How he effected this I could not then or later understand, but I have since learned that this is still a puzzle to the students of bird flight. No doubt he returned to his disturbed dinner.

A little further, I came to a wide, treeless space of granite rock strewn with broken shells of mussels. Tom Dagett told me that the gulls carry inland the shells from the flats and, he says, let them fall so as to break the shell and free its edible contents. Dodo declares they sit on the trees and crack the shells, eat the inside and let the shell fall. As I found shells in the wood where were no rocks, this is my own conclusion.

The brook, fed by several tribute rills, grew smaller as I followed it, and by and by I came to a part of my property which was new to me. The ground rose sharply to northwest in an upreared ridge of granite perhaps some eighty feet high. The stream clung to the base of this rock boundary for a hundred feet. Here in some vast throe of our much mauled earth, a granite dyke had fallen in huge blocks on the brook, quite hiding it, so that I mistook its emergence for the parent source I was in search of. Climbing up and over the wreckage with Mike ahead of me, I scrambled on, hearing the hidden brook beneath me. Then I came out on a higher rock and saw below me a moss-fringed pool and on the further side two great rocks with black and orange lichens and above

luxuriant growth of ferns. From the cleft between the granite masses leapt out into the sun a great rush of water. I had found the source.

Beside the spring sat a man. His bare head bent down rested on his hands, his elbows on his knees. He was, I thought, in fact, I heard him, praying aloud. It was Hapworth. The man was plainly in the grip of some overwhelming anguish. I was quietly retreating when I heard Mike, barking a noisy greeting. I waited a minute or two so as to give the man assurance that he had not been overheard. Then ceasing to hear him I returned to the top of the rock.

As I appeared, he had risen and was making friends with Mike. He said, "Be careful how you come down the rocks. There is one rock, that one with the ferns, so balanced that it moves with a man's weight."

"Thank you," I said, and in a minute was beside him. "Thanks for the warning. This is my first visit to the spring. I had no idea of its beauty or I should have been here long ago. You were frank enough to say you like to be alone and as I find you in possession, I shall leave you with your nine-tenths of the law."

My hermit tenant laughed outright and checked his mirth abruptly, as if it had not his self-approval. The change to gravity was to me unnatural. He said, "Ah, Mr. Sherwood, you are after all the owner of this wonderful gift of earth."

"I, indeed? Who can be said to truly own a spring like this? It is," I smiled, "somewhat of a squatter on my land and off and away to the sea, with a *wanderlust,* and no more rent to pay than a cup of water."

"May I offer you some?" he said. "I left a tin cup here."

"How it sparkles! Thanks. It is delicious and cold."

"About forty-five degrees," he returned. "To the southward the springs are not below fifty-two degrees or so I have read. It has a good deal of gas, as you may notice, carbonic acid, I suppose."

"But where does it get it?" I queried. "Not from these hard granites?"

"Yes, they all contain some carbonate of lime."

"I see. But these rocks can not be the sources of this great constant volume of water."

"I suppose not, but although they seem quite impermeable, they must be one of the storehouses of the rain, for a cubic yard of granite weighing two tons contains three and a half gallons of water and can absorb a gallon more. There are also in the microscopic cavities various gases, notably, carbon dioxide." This time he used the modern chemist's name for what is popularly carbonic acid. In his interest he seemed to have lost his look of melancholy and a way I had noticed of glancing about him like a person in dread of something.

Now, as I pleasantly acknowledged my gratified

curiosity, I saw him turn once more and look behind him. I was quick to see and to re-awaken his interest.

"But how," I asked, "can this granite so feed this great overflow? Can it have another parent supply?"

"Who can say? No one, I believe, suspects that water is ever formed in the earth. It may be,—it may be in some far hidden laboratory."

"A curious thought," I said. "The granite surfaces must take in rain water and it may soak in we know not how far and yield it by evaporation in dry weather. If it somewhere releases this gathered fluid under ground may be a question."

"I think you put it well, Mr. Sherwood, but these granites are of unknown depth and this, like other springs, may come from some far distant part of the under earth."

He was again the natural, well-mannered gentleman, charmed out of his mood by the claim our talk was making upon an educated intellect.

I repeated his words, "the under earth," adding, "That makes one think of far hidden darkness, of great caverns of water, of rivers in your under earth, of the flowing to and fro of a great complexity of little water courses ever moving like the circulation of some monster; and then somewhere the children of earth-darkness burst out into the sunshine and bid us be glad with them but tell no stories of that under-world." I ceased, a little surprised at my own way of putting a simple matter.

"Ah, Mr. Sherwood," said my companion, "you have what I lack and envy, the gift of wholesome imagination."

"I, of all men," I laughed outright. "I wonder what my older business friends would say if anyone were to put that talent to my credit."

"It may have been a long-buried talent."

"Perhaps," I said. "I am learning many things about myself since I came to this wild country."

"I have learned nothing and lost nothing," said Hapworth shortly. "Good-bye. I must go. I leave you a gayer companion, your spring."

He picked up his book and with no more words disappeared into the forest.

I too walked away and accompanied the brook seaward. "Very soon I must hear from Euphemia and then shall know whether this lonely, troubled man were better let alone or could be helped by me, or whether after all I need to bother myself at all about this neighbor?

X

A FEW days later Mrs. Christian made one of her rare visits and told me an amazing story. She had persuaded Cairns to visit me and to make sure called for him and set out with him through the woods.

At this time, it being near to sundown and the west a wonder of opalescent colors, I ordered tea on the rock. Mrs. Christian settled herself for the talk she enjoyed.

"Dear me, but that tea is good."

"Well," I asked, "what of Cairns?"

"That man, you won't believe it. He just stopped short at the big spruce and said he could n't stand it and with that, he went home again."

"Is he afraid of me or what is it?"

"No, he don't want to see you or anybody."

"Does he pay rent? It is of no moment, but I want to know."

She laughed. "He cuts firewood for Jones. I suppose Jones pays you the cost, or don't. A bit mixed up, is n't it?"

I agreed with her. "He does n't," I said, and asked if she knew what was the matter with Cairns.

Upon this she sat still in evident hesitation and

then said, "If I was to have another cup of that tea, I might get courage to tell you about that man."

The tea was duly served and I said, "Dodo has ready a pound of it for you to take home. Now, about Cairns? Come for more when it 's out."

"Oh, thank you! Well, there is n't anything so very bad, and yet there is and the fact is, I 'm ashamed for him and right sorry, too."

"Then let us drop it."

"But I can't—I can't—you 've got a right to know. Here you come and find a lot of people in your woods and you give them land and buy a boat for Tom Dagett and want to help everybody and lend me books. Why, you 're just an angel—oh, you are! Think of Jones telling us you 'd be a hard land owner."

"He may have believed it."

"Indeed, and now this poor creature Cairns behaving this way to you. I 'm right grieved for him, I am. He 's got a share of what sorrow I have to spare for misfortuned people. But it 's getting late and I must go."

"Not till I hear your story. Dodo will take a lantern and see you safely home."

"Well—well—it is n't short and my man 'll be right anxious. I don't so much mind that. It does men good now and then to be a bit anxious."

It was now the dusk of twilight as I sat and smoked and, looking over the slowly darkening sea, heard Mrs. Christian tell all she knew about Cairns.

"He was a Belport boy, Mr. Sherwood, and a right merry, pleasant-mannered young man. He was at college when the war broke out, could n't have been over fifteen, and was going to study law. You see he was an orphan and lived with John Cairns. That was the judge, his uncle. He 's dead now.

"Well, this nephew went to the war near to the end of it. He was a private in a company where our Major Browne was captain. I guess these boys north and south lightlied this war business. Once in, there 's no decent way out. My John he was in it at the close when it fell to be in need of men. He does n't incline to talk about it."

"I do not wonder at that, Mrs. Christian. We paid a great price for a precious thing. But go on."

"Well, sir, what was left of Company K came back and of course there was a fuss over them. Before this people must have heard something, because you see there were letters. The others of the company were shy of Bob Cairns and by degrees it got out. The man was a coward. He just wilted like with fear the first time he was under fire. Then he was always sick when there was to be a fight. It must have been awful bad at last, because the day his company marched in, they would n't have Bob with them.

"So it all got out. He was just made to feel it, all round. You know in a little town, sir, nothing never gets forgotten. At last the judge had it all out of

Major Browne and Mr. Grice, the editor. They do say it killed the old man, but not before he had time to change his will. He left Bob one hundred dollars a year and all the rest of his money to the town.

"Bob stood it out for some years and I guess took to liquor. I don't wonder at that. At last he went away for a year and then when he came back, Jones told him, they do say, that if he 'd keep Jones in wood, he might bide here. His uncle did leave him his books and now for years he just cuts wood and reads and never goes to Belport. He 's what Mr. Hapworth calls a soul cripple. That 's about all I know of it. Is n't it awful?"

"A very sad story."

"Oh, it 's worse than sad. The women were the hardest. A girl he was in love with just broke it off sharp."

"Would you have done that?" I asked, curious.

"I don't know. I think women do scorn a coward worse than men do. My old man will never give me that trial. Seems to me I must be going. Worst of it is that Bob Cairns is a honest and right capable man and now he 's just wasted, and a fellow like Jones having all the best chances! Good night."

I watched them pass into the wood until Dodo's lantern was lost to sight. I went back to the rock with another subject for thought, courage. My own had never once been tested. The events of the next day put it all out of mind for the time, but I began to think I might do something to help Cairns.

When Dodo came back and got my dinner ready he guessed we would have another big blow. My barometer was of the same opinion, but I had become used to storms and after making some notes went to bed. I was aroused by the noise of the surf and the wind. When again I awakened near to dawn it was to find myself in the open air, shelterless. Two of the tents were lodged in the wood. I leaped out of bed and found Dodo at my side. My old red oak was swaying dangerously in the blast, but escaped with a few broken branches. Two great pines to the left had gone down in ruin.

As the spray was flying high in air, we set to work to shelter my books in the only remaining tent, which we made secure, and still the wind increased in violence. It was in fact a new experience. The catboat, sheltered by the island and ledge, rode it out bravely, but the canoe was in fragments on the beach. Tom Dagett appeared about seven, anxious, and with some trouble we set up the recovered tents and at last went to the kitchen for shelter.

"These there dry blows," said Tom, "without rain is the worst, but this is the biggest since the big blow in 1845. Even the fish could n't stand that. Lots of them was just pitched up among the woods, so my mother said. The gulls was blowed miles away inland, up on the hills."

The charging waves left no beach, the wood was groaning and perilous from falling branches and I persuaded Tom to stay with me all day. He was

more silent than usual, but swore as his lobster pots rolled in breaking on the rocks.

"Oh, Lord! To see them, Mr. Sherwood, kind of shakes a man's faith in Providence."

"And my canoe, Tom. Look at it."

"It 's bad, sir, awful. I hate to see a boat battered that way. It 's a so derned alive kind of a thing."

It was like the feeling I used to have about the wreckage of my machines. Certain things in one's use do get what I concluded to describe to myself as de-materialized; but by noon the wind lessened and I sent Dodo to see how my tenants had fared. My fears for them were justified when he came home and told me that Hapworth's roof had been torn off and lay on the road, and Cairns' cabin was much damaged.

I let him alone, but I wrote to Hapworth:

Dear Sir:

I have asked Christian to go to Belport and get men to replace your roof. Meanwhile I offer you the hospitality of a tent and no more of my company than you may in all honesty desire. Dodo will carry hither whatever you may need. You will be most welcome.

Yours truly,

Camp Retreat. JOHN SHERWOOD.

Dodo hurried home with his answer:

Dear Sir:

I can not sleep out of doors. I would, but I can not. Unless I share the crowded quarters of my good neighbor

Christian, I must of necessity break a self-imposed rule and accept your kindness. I do it the more willingly because you are to me an entire stranger.

Yours truly,
JAMES HAPWORTH.

I asked Dodo to set up a tent and arrange bedding, etc. I put books and writing material on my guest's table and then reread this very singular letter. Certainly it was ungracious and "not sleep out of doors" in the open, why not? The weather was now good. A few days later I might have hesitated in my too ready inclination to be helpfully hospitable.

About seven toward the dusk of this fourteenth day of June, my guest arrived. He made a great effort, as I saw, to be at his ease and to appear thankful. I, in turn, was formally courteous and, showing him his tent, left him. In an hour one of Dodo's best dinners was on table and I made an effort to keep the talk on to the storm and its happenings, but there were long pauses I vainly tried to fill with talk trifles.

At last, as we rose, he said, "You must pardon my silences. I have lost these two years the habit of talk."

"Be silent," I said gaily, "or talk as pleases you. I too fled from social life, being a sick animal. We will each respect the other's wish for mental loneliness. The wind is over. Come out to the rock. You smoke?"

"I do, my pipe, I prefer that. It is more like a companion than the cigar. The cigar is only an acquaintance, but the pipe is a friend, sometimes the only friend."

Knowing his desire to be silently companioned, I sat and smoked for a long time without a word.

At last he said, "Do you like this clamor of the ocean?"

"Yes, and the wind in the woods."

"Oh, not that, not that. Sometimes it is too like the cry of a soul in distress."

"Are we not apt to interpret these voices of nature as our own moods determine?"

"Ah! but a life-long mood!"

"That," I returned, "would be morbid."

"Then I am morbid," he said. "It may be the retribution for sin to have blotted out of nature all gladness, all pleasure, like estrangement from a friend."

"I do not see that as possible."

"You are fortunate. Pray God you never may find it possible. It is early, but with your permission I will go to bed. I am tired. I promise to make believe a little while I am your guest. I have been talking of myself to my astonishment. But I promise to do it no more. Good night, and pleasant dreams, or better, none."

Three more days went by, a new canoe was ordered and meanwhile Dodo borrowed a small dory

from Tom, as it was desirable to have a small boat in tow of the catboat for landings. The sailboat was easily put in order, having suffered little.

I learned from Christian that my guest's house needed more than a roof to make it habitable and that the repairs would hardly be completed within a week or two. This promised a longer tax on my hospitality than I had intended. What else could I do but insist on his remaining? He spent most of the day in his tent, or with a book on the rocks. At meals, he said little, but although very dejected early in the day he was almost cheerful after six or seven P. M., and at times talked freely of books and travel. A sudden anxious look about him and a long silence were apt to follow. He might then rise quickly and go out of the tent and return with some excusing statement about a look at the weather.

As a guest he gave me no trouble, being absent in the woods for half the day, but to my surprise, he never seemed to concern himself about the house I was having repaired and for which I was paying. My shrewd neighbor, Mrs. Christian, spoke of this to me one day when I sought to know something more of a man whom I began to regard as at times uncomfortably beyond the boundaries of mere eccentricity.

"I suppose," she said, "Mr. Hapworth will be going home? You 've gone and done a heap for him. Does he ever mind to thank you?"

"Oh, enough," I said, "quite enough."

"I 've done no end of chores for him and at last

my man got the better of his lazy tongue and says, 'Seems to me, Hapworth, you just take things and never give so much as a word.'

"Then I put in and says, 'Mr. Hapworth does for us more than we do for him,' which is true. Peter just growled, 'Maybe,' and Mr. Hapworth he said a queer thing."

"Well?"

" 'Oh,' he says, 'Peter Christian, silence is the best thanks. You can't ever proportion thanks. Best not to give any.' I didn't get that clear, but my Peter says, 'I 'd like to conduct business on that there basis.' Now it was queer, but Hapworth 's like that. Fact is, he 's kind of unexpectable."

I laughed and said, "I prefer to thank when I get things, but not to be thanked when I give."

"I know, sir, but you like to think the thanks are somewhere." This was like her, and true. "Brought you two punkin pies. They might go to my credit on the account between you and me," and laughing merrily, "Oh, no thanks, please. About Mr. Hapworth, sir, I gave up this long time back. My Susan says he 's a saint and Cairns says he 's too good for this earth and Peter says he 's a wise fool."

"And you?"

"Oh, I guess you know." I did not, and she went away with laughter, with which she was abundantly generous, being now with me on terms of easy intimacy. The talk left me with more than mirth and with some feeling that this capable woman, being

grateful to my guest, would not express the uneasiness about him which I believed she shared with me.

The third day of this week we were sitting in my tent, not long before bedtime. A neglected lot of letters brought from Belport by Christian lay on a table. Beside it, in an easy camp chair, Hapworth was reading Middleton's Cicero, the kind of neutral book he generally selected from my increasing store.

He laid the book down and looking up said, "How simple, what an everyday familiar matter suicide or in fact death must have seemed to the pagans. Was it that they had no real belief in a hereafter, in any after, or a perfect belief in another and less uneasy world?"

I did not know enough of what the cultured Romans believed to answer him and frankly confessed ignorance, but was sure the upper class of Romans feared death less than does the average man of our own day. And after all, I continued, as it is as natural as birth, why dread it? I knew that I had not feared it, but had greatly feared one mode of its approach.

Hapworth said, "As to birth, we have no choice, or none we now remember," and then, with a pause, "As to death we have more or less of a lifetime to think of it, but until the priest surrounded it with fear, men seem to have regarded it with little of the terror they have of it to-day. I do not fear it and indeed I should welcome it. I am of opinion that

self-destruction ought to be made legally possible, considered by a Court and authorized."

"Or not," I returned. "If not, what then?"

"In the first case the man would be honorably dismissed from life. In the second, if he killed himself he would forfeit money deposited with the Court." This he said with gravity.

I looked at him, amazed. "But," I said, "what would a suicide care about money?"

"Yes," he said, with singular simplicity, "that did not occur to me. But after all it is not quite sure that we cannot take money and its influences to the death world. There is a way."

My exclamation and look of too-astonished interest seemed to arrest this revelation. He said, "Another time; not now. My views on suicide are quite rational, as defensible as Donnes'. I can lend you his book."

I did not like the trend of his talk. I had watched him of late with increasing belief that when at night he stood with me on the rock, talking visibly but not audibly, he was facing the temptation to end a life of, to me, mysteriously complete unhappiness. Once he had said how easy it would be. Now I spoke out, being more and more disturbed.

"Mr. Hapworth," I said, "in self-defense I am about to take a great liberty. You have had it in mind to kill yourself. To do so here would be for me a calamity and would destroy for me the pleasure

of a home which has brought me health, hope and much more. You have no right to do this thing."

He made a frank reply. "Yes, I have long been so tempted. To do it here would be ungrateful, a piece of bad manners. I had the temptation, but have it no longer. I have reached a decision of late which relieves me of the responsibility of ending my life. What it is, I beg you will not ask me."

"Certainly not. Let us drop this subject. You have very greatly reassured me. May I add that you have been no unwelcome guest."

"Thank you. I fear that I may not have been just what a guest should be." For a moment he was silent and then returned to his book, while I began to open my letters. Here at last was Euphemia's reply.

My dear John:

Why you want to hear about this Mr. Norman, I am rather curious to know. It was enough for me at first that you desire the information I find myself at last able to give.

The Norman family came from Canada long ago to Maryland. (This explained to me the use of the surname Benedict. Here with us, as I have said, it is never given to a child.) Mr. Norman left the charge he had near your works to take a church in Baltimore. Sometime later—I cannot get the dates, he married in Italy, Miss Maynard, a very charming Maryland woman. She seems to have had moderate means. He inherited before marriage a considerable property. I ought to have said that I knew Miss Maynard's mother.

Soon after their marriage, he began to exhibit causeless jealousy in regard to his wife and at last threatened to kill her. At this time also he sold some of his stocks and placed the money, about twelve thousand dollars, as was learned later, in the village bank near your works. At last he did fire at his wife. She was unhurt, and he fled. He was caught a little later and, her friends intervening, he was with his wife's consent, put in an asylum.

It is a strange story and this the strangest part. He became worse, told everyone calmly that he had killed his wife and still was in constant fear of arrest. It was, it seems, thought well to let him see his wife. When she appeared, he cried out that she was dead and fell fainting or in some kind of convulsion. It only deepened his delusion. He never did see her again.

A few days later he escaped from the asylum. It was found that he had gone at once to Millwood, his old home, and there drawn from the bank the money he had deposited. Then he disappeared and now for two years has been looked for in vain. His wife has come at last to believe him dead. I learned all about him from a Baltimore woman, Mrs. Howard, a distant relation of the Maynards. This is all, but it is, I am sure, entirely correct. If he had been really a priest this kind of thing could not have happened.

This was so like Euphemia that, despite the near neighborhood of tragedy, I broke into laughter.

My guest looked up from his book and said quietly, "Is the cause of laughter one to be shared?"

"Heavens!" I exclaimed inwardly, "to think of it, of this man asking questions about himself!"

"No, no," I said, "what is a joke for one is not always a joke for two."

"Ah, I beg pardon. Until of late, all my curiosity concerning the less or even the larger things of life has ceased to exist."

"And now you are changing?"

"Yes, since I made the decision on which I shall act, I am changing. Does a man ever know himself? I seem to be like one being watching another's change. I am full of self-surprises. To know yourself is impossible. I am one man to-day—another man to-morrow."

"I too am changing, Mr. Hapworth. Let us hope," I spoke gravely, "that it is for both of us well to change." That I, of all men, should talk in this way to a stranger, seemed to me almost with the spoken word, a quite self-amazing thing.

My singular guest returned again to his book and I to my cousin's letter. The postscript announced the forwarding of two pair of high stockings, knit by herself, very useful but, and I glanced over the top of the letter I had now read again with care, what a mingling of the trivial and tragic. What a pleasing situation for a man flying from responsibility, from cares, from the need of decisions. I was in the trap of that troubling thing, my duty to this, my neighbor. Ignore it? At one time I would have done so, but now in the clutch of this trap, how to get out of it I did not comprehend. I longed to question him.

The white canvas interior I see as I write, the man intent on his book, for me strangely intent, considering our talk. The noise of the brook came and was gone and came again in the freakish way of night noises. The ocean drummed on the rocks, one unchanging rhythm.

I slowly folded this fateful letter, replaced it in the envelope and sat still, asking myself what I must decide. Here was I in the possession of facts long sought for by every resource love and money could command. I had now up to the hour this man's story, both halves of it. Was he still under the delusion that he had murdered the woman he once loved? His acts had shown the cunning of the insane and under the belief that he would fall into the hands of the law, he had fled, pursued by such anguish of terror as is beyond the conceivable reach of the sane mind. What now was this decision in which he found relief? And there too was the woman waiting with her waning hope. The man was indeed changing. That was obvious, but if for the better or the worse, I could not always be sure. He must have had or believed he had, a reason for the act he presumed himself to have committed.

Whether I liked it or not the action to be taken, and action there must be, lay with me. I rose and went out on the rock with a pipe for counsellor. For an hour I walked to and fro, vainly turning over in my mind what to do. I went back to the tent and found that my guest had gone to bed. That

wise *præ dormitium* presented me with no decisive advice and I passed an unpleasant night.

The morning brought me no counsel that seemed to me prudent to act upon. I had never been indecisive but here was a case of urgent responsibility, with perhaps need to act and any long delay possibly perilous. I was glad to excuse myself from taking at once a positive role in this tragic drama. The man was better, as even Dodo observed. He was less self-absorbed and had twice expressed himself in a natural way about my hospitality to a stranger. Every visible gain in mental health would make it more possible to be of use. But after all, my truest reason for delay was that I did not know what to do. I sorely needed counsel. Should I write to his wife? It would bring her hither. But what then?

After breakfast, to my surprise, Hapworth said, "What are you going to do to-day?" Usually he was very melancholy early in the day and retired to his tent until luncheon.

I replied, "I want to see Tom Dagett. Suppose we walk up the beach to his cabin. Dodo will meet us with the catboat and you must sail with me, a perfect day for it."

Hapworth hesitated. I gave my orders to Dodo.

"Come," I said, and led the way down to and along the beach. For a while my companion said nothing. This time at least his attention was on a very obvious bodily discomfort.

"Good gracious!" I exclaimed, "you are wearing

moccasins." A mile on one of these Maine beaches over pebbles large or small is somewhat trying to a man with the best footgear.

"Yes, Cairns gave them to me. He always wears them and in the woods they are pleasant, but here—how much more is there? I do not know this coast."

I laughed, not ill pleased. "About a quarter of a mile. Consider it penance, part of our Retreat."

"You should have your share then." He smiled grimly and watched his feet and the stones.

"I am having my penance," I said, "but not in your fashion."

"How then?"

"How? In a Retreat we ask no questions. Our confessor may."

"What confessor?"

"The priest called common sense, or if you like, the Reverend Dr. Conscience. But we agreed not to be socially intimate. We settled that long ago."

"Yes, yes. These stones get worse and worse."

"Penance? Retreat?" I laughed. "If you want me to use for you any words expletory, I am at your service."

He laughed, "But there is no such word."

"I offer then expletives."

"That only means superfluous."

"Thank you for verbal education," I laughed.

"No words express the situation. The moccasins get thinner and the stones too."

"There are the woods," I said, "but to beat a retreat and shirk penance—Fie, for shame."

He made no reply but stumbled up the rocks and kept on along the edge of the forest, while I, not at all unhappy over the bodily distress of my patient, held to the beach. We came together at Tom's cabin.

"Ain't seen you here before in all these two years, Mr. Hapworth."

"No, there has been no occasion."

"Well, maybe not, as long as John Christian fetches your fish, but the sea 's fine company."

"I want none," said Hapworth shortly.

"Well, now, that 's queer to me. The sea 's a good friend and a cruel foe and a fair good preacher. It 's father and mother-in-law and family too for me. You 'll get to like it."

"He will," I said. "He is to have his first sail now. Here is the money in this envelope for your friend's boat."

"Thank you," said Tom, and we went to the shore where Dodo waited with the dory.

"You 'll have a brave baptizing," said Tom, "and wind to spare. It 's gettin' lumpy."

As we approached the stern of the catboat, Hapworth exclaimed, "So you have named it the *Abbott.*"

"Retreat," I said.

"I thought boats were always feminine. Why not abbess?"

"An impropriety. Do men retreat to a nunnery?"

"Not I." His face became grave. "Not I."

"Get in," I said.

We were off and away in half a gale, I at the helm.

To my surprise, Hapworth cried out, "This is glorious. I never was in a sailboat until now. What life in these leaping waters," he paused, "and death so near."

"The marge of perils sweet," I returned.

We were running free before the wind when Dodo said to him, "Take the tiller, sir. I 'll watch you."

"Try it," I urged.

"This is port and this starboard," said Dodo pleased and important, but watching him closely. My guest's pleasure was evident as he felt his power of control over the boat.

To my relief Dodo soon took the helm and ran in under shelter of the reef. Hapworth thanked me and all day was in far better spirits, while I, alas, was haunted by the terrible question my cousin's letter kept ever before me.

When at bedtime Hapworth asked if I meant to sail to-morrow, I said yes and that we would run to Belport, lunch and return.

He said, "I prefer not to go."

"Very good. Then we will run out to one of the islands, taking our lunch with us."

"I should like that. You must think me very—well—anything but civil—yet—no matter. Good night."

The morning of the June day was warm and a rising northwest wind set the sea dancing. When

about ten we went to the beach and were about to enter the dory I heard voices and saw coming down the rocks Mrs. Christian and a man I guessed to be my other tenant, Cairns. He was a well-built man over thirty, with a face which was grave, even sombre, and which remained at rest as I said that I was glad to see him and tried to seem more than commonly pleased.

He returned very quietly, "I owe you an apology for my long delay in calling, but I am somewhat of a hermit. I wanted to talk to you about your agent, Mr. Jones."

"He needs to be talked to. I have written, dismissing him. We must not let him spoil a perfect day. Come out with me for a sail, you and Mrs. Christian, just for two or three hours."

I was sure I had made the impression I desired to make when he said, "I can not answer for Mrs. Christian, but I shall be most glad to go."

His manner was rather grave, his speech, like that of many of the men of these shores, was low and clear. I suspected that he found it agreeable to be among educated people who were ignorant of his sad defeat in life.

Mrs. Christian said, "Can't leave me out. Two hours, you say?"

"Well, not over three or four."

"Well, I 'm going anyway. Seems most like a holiday."

We were soon aboard and heading out to sea with more promise of wind than I quite fancied. Whether Hapworth, as I suspected, was aware of Cairns' story I did not then know, but he showed very clearly the courteous desire of a gentleman to enliven my odd party and for the time no one could have believed that he was the victim of an insane delusion.

Cairns became interested in my talk and Mrs. Christian delighted when Dodo asked her to aid in cooking our lunch on the island.

The norther became as usual boisterous at midday but I felt no anxiety with Dodo at the helm and the sail reefed. Presently the wind shifting, we had to tack and were soon pretty wet, which my company took pleasantly enough. We were now within a half mile of home and with need of care in meeting the seas.

"We must tack, Dodo," I said.

"Yes, sir. Ready about. Look out for the boom."

If Hapworth in his ignorance misunderstood, I can not say. He rose as the boom swung over, was struck on the shoulders, lost his balance and fell overboard into a wild sea of rolling billows. Without a word, Dodo put the boat about. I saw Cairns tear off his coat, look around him, and leap into the ocean. Dodo threw an oar after him. I heard Mrs. Christian's cry of horror and caught sight of Cairns swimming strongly. I got too a moment's impression of Hapworth and then no more.

Dodo stood up. "Next tack, sir, may fetch them. Now then, about. Take the helm, sir. Keep her full, so!"

The spray was flying. I could see little or nothing.

"Steady, sir. Now, quick, put her into the wind. Hard a port and hold her."

He caught an oar and helped the half turn. With my right hand on the tiller I flung out my left to the desperate grip of Cairns.

"The other," he gasped.

Dodo caught the limp weight of Hapworth and heaved him up and over into the boat. Cairns, with what aid I could offer, tumbled in and lay with his head on my knees. Dodo was lifting and letting fall Hapworth's arms, with, as they fell, knee pressure on the belly.

"He 's not dead, sir. Take care now. Get her about."

Mrs. Christian was admirably silent, Cairns helpless, the black busy. As we rounded the reef I brought the boat up into the wind and crying to Mrs. Christian to drop the anchor, was glad to be under the island lee in quiet water.

"What now, Dodo?" I said, as I drew up the dory we towed.

"Take Mr. Cairns ashore. Mrs. Christian, please run up and get hot water and brandy. He 'll do. He 's breathed. Come back quick. There, he 's better."

I somehow got Cairns on to the beach and left him lying in the sun, an utterly exhausted man. Then I pulled back to the catboat. Hapworth was drawing long irregular breaths. We got him ashore and at last up to the tent and into his bed, where Mrs. Christian took charge. He lay with wide-open eyes but said no word. Cairns too was put to bed in my own tent. I left Dodo in care of the camp and went away in haste up the shore to find Dagett.

"Well," he said, "what was it? I knowed you was in some trouble."

I told him briefly what had happened.

"And Cairns went over after him in that there sea? It ain't scarcely to be believed, Mr. Sherwood. Why, down Belport way they say he 's of the very scum of cowards. Them army men 'll say of a man to this day, 'He scares as bad as Bob Cairns.' I could n't of done it. I don't seem to feel I could of done it, and I 'm nigh as seaworthy as a fish."

"He 's a brave man, Tom. I 'd like to have that thing to my credit."

"Me the same, sir,—and was you wantin' any help?"

"Yes."

I sent him to tell Christian I must keep his wife all night. Then I walked homeward. I soon knew that I was unusually tired. Presently I sat down and began to laugh. Here was I, a sick man, convalescing creditably, comfortably, making friends with nature and of a sudden I have on my hands an in-

sane man, a situation eminently tragic and, to cap all, what I hoped would be only a temporary hospital ward. Then for added human interest there was this amazing contrast of cowardice in the lad and perfect courage in the man.

I went home thoughtful and disposed to feel hopeful as to the rescued man and his yet unsolved problem. Cairns was doing well, but Hapworth was wandering in mind and uneasy in body. I ventured to give him a dose of morphia, which sent him into a deep sleep. After dinner I went to see Cairns, who was lying in my day tent.

"And so," I said bluntly, as I sat down, "you are a coward? I would give much to have done what you did. Nothing but Dodo's readiness saved you. You had n't half a chance in that seaway."

"Then, sir, you know my story?"

"Yes, I have heard it."

He sat up, put a hand on mine and said, "Then I escape the need to tell you of that boy shame. I thank God for this chance. But I want you to know that I did not do it just to get rid of the idea I was a coward. That man is of God's best. What is his trouble, I don't know. I do know that if it had not been for him my misery would have made me a drunkard."

"But," I said, "you rescued more than your friend, you rescued your own life."

"Yes, perhaps, perhaps. It is years, sir, since I

talked to anyone, but Mrs. Christian, of this. I can't talk about it now."

"You need not." I rose.

"Oh, don't go. I want to, and I must say something. Sit down. Mr. Hapworth has given Susan Christian an education such as women do not get up here in this hard-worked country.

"What he taught me in my loneliness was to find company in the books he lent me. I owe to him all that and much more. But, Mr. Sherwood, the more educated I became and the more I lived in the books with those who had done great things, the more terribly have I felt the failure which wrecked my life. Why, as a boy I was always thinking about heroic acts and what I might do some day—oh, just like all boys—and then—my God—to think of it! In the long winter nights, sitting alone by the fire in my cabin, I have had awful hours.

"I have longed for a war—oh, for a chance—a chance. It did all seem so hopeless. Then I would tramp through the snow to Christian's and talk to Susan and go away cursing the refinements Hapworth had brought into her life and mine. It has made me increasingly sensitive and here I was constantly with the Christians, pretty sure how Mrs. Christian and her old soldier felt, not daring to risk a new defeat. Even if I had been sure of Susan, I would never have asked her to marry a man who—I can't go on. I had to talk to you. I could not talk to Hapworth.

Any talk about women somehow troubles him. And now I can go to Susan and she will know and feel that what I did this morning those men who mock at me to this day would never have dared to do, and that 's laughable, Mr. Sherwood, because,—oh, if they only knew, it was n't courage—oh, because it was simply the love and gratitude of a soul rescued from the hell of drink.

"Thank you for listening to me. I shall say no more. But to think of it, a kind word on the beach from you gave me this chance and I came near to saying no. It scares me now to think how damn near I was—may God bless you for the gift you gave me this morning—if you had not had just that gentle-mannered way Mrs. Christian talks about—I might—oh, Lord!" and he ceased, exhausted by his venture and the excitement of confession.

I was much moved by what I thus heard and was glad to have a ready reply.

"You went overboard to save a friend. I like to say to you that before this gave me a new motive I had talked with Mrs. Christian and was planning to do something for you."

He sat up. "Is that so? What, before this? You can't mean it, sir."

"Yes, I meant it, but now you have made a friend and so have I. I have discharged Jones. You are to take over my affairs. We will talk of this further when you are better. I am sure from what I hear that you are a competent man and one to trust and I

mean to trust you. I have long had in mind to buy some pine lands up the shore. Now I wish you to be my agent and to cut and sell as seems best to you. No, don't thank me. This is *my* blessed chance. You have had *yours*. Good night. We will breakfast together."

He merely looked at me with over-full eyes and fell back on his pillow murmuring, "A friend—you my friend—thank God!"

CHAPTER XI

I TURNED in early, wondering as I dropped into slumber, what effect the day would have on Hapworth and if it would not be best to speak outright of his delusions; in common phrase, to take the bull by the horns. Then I laughed at the thought of that as being the horns of a dilemma, for to let go were perilous, to hold on till the bull acquired a Christian spirit a lengthy task. This is the last I remember of an eventful day. I fell overboard into the ocean of sleep and was as well drowned as Hapworth.

After all these thousands of years, it is strange that we know so little of that time in which we expend a third of our years. It is a country from whose bourne all travellers return with little knowledge. I have heard that it solves problems and confides their solution to the *post dormitium*. I much doubt the story I have read of poets making verse in sleep. I heard that Voltaire did it, or said he did, and even that he composed in sleep a whole Canto, but he was the prince of all the liars. Once I swore outrageously in a dream and at Euphemia, of all people, for in fact I never swear in daytime. I wonder how many men a man is. I seem, as I write, to be not a changed man, but another man and never more than when

I am born again at morning for the life of the day.

Awaking at dawn, I heard Mrs. Christian astir in the Hapworth ward. Cairns, in his ward, was snoring with gentle rhythmic regularity, to be scanned in spondees, and then out of the ridiculous suggestions of memory came, "But gently scan thy fellow man." Enjoying my nonsense, I stood listening. To scan Dodo's performance were impossible. I thought of the god Snora and went down to my bath laughing.

A south wind gently chased what Shelley calls wavelets along the beach line. They tumbled and played like wild white kittens or streamed out along the shore in wind-twisted coils, snake like. It was quite new to me, for the south wind blowing parallel to my beach is rare. I took one fearsome, delicious plunge and then a douche of fresh brook water.

Dodo was calling to me to come up and see Mr. Hapworth, "he was that wild." I made haste to dress and went into the tent. Hapworth was seated on his bedside.

"Mr. Sherwood," he cried, "this man will not let me get up. Are they outside?"

"Who?"

"The detectives!"

"Nonsense. There is no one but me."

"I must have been dreaming." He sunk back in bed, saying, "What is the matter? What was it?"

To which I replied, "You went out to sail yesterday."

"Yes, I remember that."

"You fell overboard. Cairns went over after you and saved your life. Don't you remember that?"

"No, nothing until I was in the tent."

"Indeed. You must keep quiet until you are better."

"He saved me?"

"Yes."

"Then he did me an evil turn."

"No, a good one for you and for him."

"You are very kind to a man like me. I do not want to live."

"Oh, you will. You are the victim of some absurd delusion."

"Who told you that?" he cried fiercely. To go on or retreat? I did not know which were better.

"We will not talk of it now."

"You had better not," he exclaimed angrily.

He was so much excited that I gave up all speech for a little and then said merely, "Trust me as a friend, Mr. Hapworth. I will come again, and do you feel well enough for books?"

"No, thank you, and I had rather be alone."

"Very good. You will not tell Cairns he did you an ill turn."

"I am a troubled man, Mr. Sherwood, and sometimes I think I am possessed by fiends, but I am at least a gentleman."

"Pardon me," I said, and left him. For two days he lay abed, cared for by Dodo and me.

I saw meanwhile much of Cairns, whom I increas-

ingly liked. We settled that there should be a saw-mill, I to supply the money and he, as my partner, to divide with me the profits. He suggested Christian as foreman. The change in the man's manner was to me a daily pleasure. Moreover, he was intelligent and thoughtful. Once again he spoke, now quite at his ease, of his own misconduct and at last said, "Don't you think, sir, there ought to be for crime after the man has been punished by law a statute of limitation in regard to the social consequences? I mean for a repentant man. He is apt to be made to suffer endlessly."

I said, "Yes, but I fear we may wait long for that."

"I suppose you are right, sir, but it is hard. I found it so."

"But yours was not a crime."

"Oh, the worst of crimes, a crime against my country."

"It is over for you now, a thing in the past of a boy."

"Yes, but not the memory of it."

"You will outlive even that bitterness. Let us talk of the mill, Cairns."

Mrs. Christian reported the wonder our adventure excited in Belport, whither she had gone, I was sure, for an honest gossip about Cairns. I fancy it lost nothing in the telling. "The Mayor, he 's coming out to see you, and more of them."

When she had gone, Cairns said to me, "I will not see them."

"Yes," I said, "you will. You resented their treatment of you, but if it was cruel and excessive, was it not founded on facts you could not deny?"

"Yes, I was all they said—but to be brutally handled for years—it was too much, and there was, what was worse, a woman."

"You will find a kinder one."

"I have. I ought to tell you. I almost did tell you."

"Susan Christian?"

"Yes. Now I can ask her. A week ago I could not."

"By George, I will build a house. We 'll plan it to-night; and be thankful for this new world you found under water. Be simply, quietly pleasant with these people. Think of them as glad of your rescue of Robert Cairns from the bad opinion of men who are some of them surely, oh, no doubt of it, glad to believe in you again."

"I will," he said, laughing, "but you ought to have been a preacher, Mr. Sherwood."

"The devil!" I exclaimed, and went away laughing and thinking of the whist or poker party at the club hearing of me as an angel and a preacher, elect of nature.

Mrs. Christian was right. The Belport folk found difficulty in reversing their opinion of the man whom their contempt had driven into exile.

I had the benefit of two visits from these somewhat puzzled people. This was late in the afternoon of

my advice to Cairns. The day had been warm. The air was hazy with the smoke from a smudge in front of the tents, an attention to the mosquitoes. I was reading, or trying to, in the failing light. Cairns had a table outside of the tent and was busy with a sketch plan I had made of the mill and of some of my suggestions for adjusting the saws.

Within the shelter of my tent, I heard Cairns say, "If Mr. Sherwood were here, he might ask you to sit down. I take no such liberty." I sat up, attentive, and heard what followed.

"Why, Bob, what 's the matter?"

His voice rose. "I am Mr. Cairns, not Bob, and you, I suppose, are still editor of the *Belport Star*. What is it you want?"

"Why, what 's amiss? I guess you 're still some angry and the fact is you was n't too charitably considered. Some don't altogether credit the story of that heroic rescue. I call it heroic. Now a few particulars would gratify—I assure you would gratify, the legitimate desire of the public to hear from you personally. In fact—"

Then I heard Cairns break in angrily, "Mr. Grice, I think that will do. I—"

"But—permit me—when you were in trouble years ago, I am sure your trouble was misstated, misunderstood—"

"It was not. I behaved like the coward I was. You were of those who made the worst of a boy's misbehavior. It is men like you, who struck no blow

in the war, who submitted to no test of courage, who, north and south, have done all they could to keep alive ill feeling. You can't interview me."

"But, Mr. Cairns, you are n't very wise not to make friends with the press. It 's a power, sir—"

"A power. Yes—for good or evil. Stop just here, Mr. Grice. You came to get an article for your paper, and because I want none of you, you threaten me, in a way. You and your press may go to Sheol if you know what that is. Good-bye."

I heard him moving and the other man exclaim, "Well, by George!" Then he too went away through the woods. I regretted not to have seen him.

Coming out, I saw Cairns, still red and angry.

"Well, well," I laughed, "you are doing pretty well with my sermon."

"Mr. Sherwood, that man was the first one to take my miserable story straight to my uncle. It killed him. He was a proud man. It killed him. He had had many troubles and deaths and, as he was fond of me, what I did or failed to do, hit him hard. You see, my folks had been in every war since the Louisburg time. I did so want to kick that man. He will have to be careful."

That was my opinion. This happy, alert, well built, young fellow was an altered personality, had undergone a sea change.

Mr. Hapworth was now up and came to meals. What he said to Cairns of his rescue I neither heard nor asked. The latter was to leave next day to bar-

gain for the pine lands. There were other guests, not a few, mosquitoes and black flies. They did not bite me at all, but to my amusement they attacked Hapworth ferociously, singularly disturbing the continuity of his melancholic moods, so that he was every now and then running out to stir up the smudge, which—the smudge—is an art and demands judgment and cedar bark, as not everyone knows. Now this was years ago but nowadays we have Christian Science and of course no need to scratch the bite even of a Jersey mosquito.

I was speculating that night on the remedial value of these tormentors when Dodo appeared. He was much excited. "That gentleman! Did n't you hear him!"

"I did not."

"He got up last night, about twelve o'clock, and came to my tent and told me he was afraid to be alone. Two days ago he said he killed someone. I asked him who it was and he did n't seem to know. I 'm scared of that man. He comes and sits in the kitchen when you 're away and he 's hoodooed the bread so it won't rise!"

"Nonsense!"

"Never hear that? The bread won't ever rise if there 's a crazy around. I just think, sir, he ought to have a doctor."

"That is my opinion, Dodo, and I am glad to tell you that I have persuaded Dr. Heath to pay me a visit. I wrote before we started this private sani-

tarium and, Dodo, Miss Euphemia is coming with him. You will go to Belport in the catboat to-morrow and wait for them. If the day is bad, they must drive up and walk through the woods. Get another tent and blankets, whatever we need. They may keep you till day after to-morrow."

"Yes, sir, the doctor he 's all right, but Miss Phemy—"

"Well?"

"I was only just reflecting."

"Oh, get out!"

"Better send that gentleman home. His house is most done."

"No, it is not."

"Yes, sir."

Since of late I knew of Hapworth's delusion I would have been glad to put off Euphemia's visit, but it was now out of the question and I sorely needed Heath's counsel.

Dodo went away at dawn before I bathed and for a time the population was limited to Hapworth, Mike, myself, mosquitoes, and an occasional black fly.

I routed Hapworth out at sun-up and made him take a dip in the cold surf. He re-appeared at breakfast, which was none of the best, as Dodo being absent I tried my hand at an omelette and made coffee in the teapot with memorable results. Hapworth heard that Dodo had gone to Belport, but of my new guests, I said, as yet, nothing. My companion was for the time of day notably better and would go out

to the kitchen and make the coffee and, in fact, did make it well. I began coolly to talk of his rescue and the Belport editor and he in turn very rationally of Cairns and his good qualities, and what I had done for him, with a pleasant word of Susan.

At last he said, "Were you ever haunted by a dream until now and then it seemed to you to have been real?"

This abrupt break into subjects I had with care avoided was rather startling and put me on my guard. Was it a sign of recovering reason and a hopeful symptom?

"Oh, yes," I replied; "I used to dream of being able to move through the air at will until at last for a little while, on waking, I felt I could do it."

"But not permanently do it?"

"No, of course not. One may even have in sleep an insane dream of having killed someone and be pleasantly contradicted by the relief of the waking state."

"But if it continued, the dream?"

"That would mean an insane state."

He was silent a while and then said, "Let us talk of something else."

"Gladly," I said. "You are better, but you need exercise. Suppose we try a long walk through the woods and over Gay Mountain. There is a good trail, or by the way, last week you spoke of trout fishing. I have not fished since I noosed pike in a Jersey mill-race. You might give me a lesson. There are all kinds of tackle in Dodo's tent."

I saw at once that I was fortunate. I left him to find rods, flies and nets, an evidently pleasured man and liking the small responsibility I declined.

While he was absent, I sat outside of my tent and smoked the pipe of reflection. Yes, I had come hither in April. It was now mid July. I must think over the situation created by the coming guests. I can not think consecutively here. At home my mind worked in an orderly, disciplined way. Here I am so jostled of late by the small needs of the moment—that I forgot to put down my first find of the red lily and an orchid nameless for me and the green fungus, luminous of damp nights, which seemed to my ignorance so wonderful. I got back to my social problem. In a day or two I would have to tell Euphemia who Hapworth was and the doctor of course very soon, to my relief. I had become pitiful of my unhappy guest and was learning to like the man and to admire his emerging social qualities and his knowledge of things of which I knew little and which were slowly acquiring interest. I had been a rather lonely fellow and without desire to be otherwise. Now the mechanism called man was winning my attention and I was glad that Cairns, a simpler personality, liked me and would be pleased to feel that I had won the regard of Hapworth, his friend, a far more complex character.

I heard a quite cheerful "Halloo!" from the man in question and went away up the brook with him. I listened like a child to his instructions, tried a cast

and another, Hapworth saying, "Strike quicker. Your personal equation is defective."

I knew what that meant. The hand did not respond quickly enough to the bite. The next time I lodged my fly in the branches of a pine and broke the tip. Then I sat down and watched the brilliant success of the personal equation of Hapworth, who soon filled his basket.

We went home and Hapworth cooked the trout in paper for lunch. Cairns turned up soon after and I went into the wood to collect marsh marigolds and twin flowers to decorate the dinner table in honor of Euphemia.

On my return I found Cairns pleasantly talking with the one-armed Major Browne. He said to me frankly, "Major Browne was about the only man in Belport, Mr. Sherwood, who was kind to me when, as a lad, I lost the respect of other men. He did his best for me with my uncle. I am glad for his sake to be able to look him in the face without shame."

"And I am glad, too," said the Major. "I 'm real glad. I hear, sir, you have been right kind to him. He deserves it."

I said simply that few things had given me more satisfaction and added, to draw out the Major, that I was sorry to see he had lost his arm, and did he miss it much?

"No and yes." It had brought him the medal of valor. That was worth an arm. I saw Cairns' face change, but the Major went on. "To think of it,

sir. That arm is in a jar in a government show in Washington. If Abe Lincoln had lived, I 'd 'ave got it for decent burial. Comes an east wind and I feel every finger and sometimes I want to scratch it, mainly the thumb, and how can I when it 's in a jar in alcohol?''

''But,'' I said, ''it would be as bad if it was buried.''

''Never thought of that. That 's so.'' The Major accepted a segar and rye whiskey and left us, remarking that he might be of service in the matter of marketing pine, and Hapworth sat down on the rock to read. Cairns turned to his plan for the mill and I to arrange the table in my large tent.

Presently Hapworth came in. He saw the seats for five and as he at once showed uneasiness, I had to explain.

''I expect my cousin, Dr. Heath. I want him to see me. You know I was said to have some lung trouble.'' I fear I did fib mildly. In fact, I shrunk from another overhauling of my interior and meant to have none. As I named Heath, Hapworth's face changed.

''Heath—Heath''—he repeated and then quickly, ''Was n't he in Italy at one time?''

''No,'' I said, rather surprised; ''never. Why do you ask?''

''And the other?''

''Oh, my cousin, Miss Euphemia Swanwick, a maiden lady. You will like her. Help me to make the table pretty.''

He exclaimed—again— "Heath, Heath," but of a sudden became interested in the flowers. He set the yellow marigolds in a central bowl and I left him laying the twin flower vines around the plates.

He said, when he came out, "A woman, you said. Where is she from?"

I told him, and once more he seemed to be set at ease, but queried, "Is she young?"

I laughed, "About fifty."

Then he went back to his book, but I saw that now and then he looked across the sea, where a light wind blowing from Belport promised my new guests an agreeable sail.

About five, having smudged the tents free of mosquitoes, never very annoying in this wind-swept space, I called Hapworth and we went to the beach to meet my guests. Euphemia and the doctor were set ashore.

"Mr. Hapworth," I said, "Miss Swanwick, Dr. Heath, both my cousins," and with a word or two of their pleasant sail, we went up to the camp, where Cairns was presented.

Euphemia was, as usual, enthusiastic, and praised everything. To my amusement, Hapworth took upon him to show her the tents and the kitchen while I set about arranging their new canvas homes.

That was a very memorable dinner. No one knew better than Euphemia that the table showed refined taste. "Not yours, John," she remarked.

"No," I said. "Mr. Hapworth's."

A moment later, between the chowder and baked lobster, I saw her put on her eyeglasses (she was very near-sighted) and carefully regard Hapworth and more briefly Cairns. Then she closed the glasses in a conclusive and to me highly indicatory way. We talked about Dodo's skill as a cook and the things we were eating. Mr. Cairns said only Dodo and two women he knew could broil a chicken. It must be split like this one.

"It looks like the arms of Austria," said Euphemia.

There was an omelette with clams, a salad and what else I forget. The talk was lightly handled. Euphemia's easier fortunes had for many years set free the natural gaiety which anxieties due to limited means had long repressed. She thought this plan of the cook serving the dinner had its advantages. He would hear the criticisms. "But after all, John, no one nowadays gives serious attention to the matter of dinner. The gourmet is extinct."

Then to my surprise Hapworth, long, too long, silent, said, smiling, "The gourmet in literature is passing, too, the refined, critical reader, the dear lover of the essay, of the little kingdom of the sonnet so few have conquered. He is passing, the sensitive gourmet of literature. We are gourmands and gorge ourselves with crude food at the newspaper trough or the magazine lunch counter."

Cairns, who had scarcely spoken at all, listened,

intelligently apprehensive, an educable creature, thorough American, appreciative of opportunities long denied.

I had rarely heard Hapworth speak so bitterly.

"We have no troughs here, Cousin Euphemia," I said, "no literary lunch counters, not a newspaper since April."

"Bless me," said my cousin. "How dreadful for this little pig! I never read the politics. I dislike drowning or being murdered. When I want to be serious I read *Punch,* and for the humorous side of life, the *Spectator's* reports of questions asked in the House of Commons."

"And," I said, "she does read the deaths, Mr. Hapworth."

"That," cried Heath, "is because she declares it is so reassuring to find that only the people with queer names die."

"It is a calumny, Mr. Hapworth." I, for my part, liked her half-meant nonsense. It was a sure sign of good humor and I had not felt quite secure about this visit. Euphemia and the doctor, Hapworth and Cairns, made a difficult social equation which was being pleasantly solved. But how strange to hear a man talk of the refinements of the essay and the sonnet and know that he believed he had murdered his wife.

As I thus reflected, Cairns, quite acceptive of Euphemia's humor, said, "Might I send for the *Belport Star?*"

"Not if you value your life." said I.

"I bought a copy as we waited for Dodo," said Euphemia, "but I did not know, Mr. Cairns, that I was to meet the editorialised hero."

"Editorialised, Cousin?" I said. "Thanks for an addition to English."

"I assure you it was most delightful. If anyone would give me such a character for my next place—but now you will tell me all about it."

Cairns said, "I must ask you not to insist. It was of no moment."

I saw his growing embarrassment. He was thinking backward. I made haste to say, "If Mr. Grice was editorially amiable, Cairns, after your interview he must have sunk the natural man in that singular creature, the reporter, at his worst."

"I wish the mosquitoes would not be so eager to interview me," said Heath. "Stir the smudge, Dodo."

"Please to explain, John," insisted Euphemia, not approving of my desire to change the subject.

"Ask Mr. Cairns, Cousin."

"Ah, Miss Swanwick," said Cairns, "I have learned that to forgive is not equivalent to forgetting. If that man praised me, I regret it. Two great happinesses are teaching me to forgive."

"Entire forgetfulness," said Hapworth, "would make forgiveness needless."

Heath looked up suddenly attentive. Miss Swan-

wick, her glasses on, was revising her primary judgments.

"You are all very enigmatic," she said. "Do you live here in an atmosphere of mystery, with islands where, my cousin writes me, no one can sleep and heroic rescues no one will tell me about? Perhaps you will, Mr. Hapworth?"

"I know less of it than anybody," he said shortly, which was true.

"You are all of you very provoking."

"Let us have our coffee on the cliff," I said, rising.

As we sat down on the rock, I threw a shawl over Euphemia's shoulders, for the chill of the north was more marked than usual. I could not have desired a more wonder-filled night for Euphemia. It was not of the kind to call out her usual small enthusiasms. The sea was at rest, the moon at full and to the north, in fact, from southeast to far northwest, on the horizon lay a semicircle of faint luminous purple, half way up to the zenith.

"My God," said Euphemia, in a low voice, "how beautiful."

"A night of prayer," I heard Hapworth mutter under his breath. "All nature seems at prayer."

"Thank you," said she, overhearing him, and we fell to silence, for of a sudden up from the purple flashed long lances of silver light and then flare of red and gold banners, flame-like, swaying, quivering, as if in some great wind, and then again the silver lances.

Hapworth was first to speak. "Do you know the line, Miss Swanwick, 'The banners of Odin stream red on the sky?' The rest I forget."

"No, I do not know the verse."

Cairns was silent and merely remarked that it was an unusual display. About ten o'clock the high-tossed lances were seen no more. The purple mound became rose-red and faintly tinted the sea. We sat still and saw it fade away.

"Do you have this often?" asked Euphemia.

"No," I said, "this is the first."

"Do great masses of color, red, I mean, trouble you with some sense of awe?" asked Hapworth. It recalled my own feeling.

"Why should they?" asked Cairns.

"Oh, the why of what we call awe no man can explain," returned Hapworth.

"You are out of my depth," said my cousin. "For me that glory of rose light was simply beautiful. I like it. I mean to be amused here, to be introduced only to new and pleasant things and to share with you all the joys of your retreat. Are you, Mr. Hapworth, like my cousin, flying for a retreat from our uneasy world?"

"I, Miss Swanwick?" he said, with entire self-command. "I am flying from an unroofed house," and then, "for two years these great lonely woods have been a very welcome retreat."

"There is a far better one," said Euphemia, "with more of helpfulness than the woods can give.

There is but one mode of retreat of real spiritual value.''

''Ah, Miss Swanwick,'' returned Hapworth, '' 'Full many are the ways that lead to God.' '' I saw Heath turn quickly and look at him.

The gravity of his quoted answer checked her reply, or seemed to. She was as usual tempted to speak of her church. What she did say was, ''Certainly in such a night as this there is something like an atmosphere of spiritual serenity, but I have felt it elsewhere. One must feel it in cathedrals and in some towns. I should breathe it, I think, in a village like Nazareth.''

I listened, curious at the serious trend of the talk. Where would it go? Heath, never a great talker, had been unusually silent.

''Talking of towns, were you ever at Assisi?'' asked Hapworth.

''Never; were you? I envy you.''

''One must be there long. I had—'' he hesitated.

''Well?''

''I had a strange experience in Assisi. I was there a month. One night I entered the great church. No one was there. I knelt at the chancel rail. Presently, as I stood up, I was aware of a tall, slight monk in gray kneeling near by. I stood watching him. After a little he rose and I followed him down the nave. At the door I lost him. How, I do not know. No one was in the street near by. He was gone.''

"St. Francis," murmured Euphemia, "and you after that are not a Catholic."

"I am catholic," he replied.

I saw that she did not like it, and aware that she was eager as usual to reply I rose and said, "In this retreat we go to bed early, Euphemia. You must be tired."

"I am."

We said good nights and went toward our tents.

"I shall go to see Christian to-morrow," said Cairns, "and early."

"Send his wife here in the morning," I said. "This way, Cousin. It is dark."

"John," she said, "I really can not go to bed until I know why you wanted to know about Mr. Norman."

"Hush," I said, "Mr. Norman is Hapworth."

"Good saints! John—that man! here! is he sane now? And here, how amazing."

"Come into my tent and we will talk, but speak low." She went with me and sat down. "I came here a pretty miserable man to make a fight for life. I wanted quiet and a mind free of care. I found a swindling agent, one Jones, who misused valuable property, and three squatters my agent was not eager for me to see. The Christians have been here long, unprosperous people because the wife is not the husband. She will be over to see you to-morrow. We will talk of this another time and of Cairns.

"Now for this man. About two years ago he came

here, paid Jones to build him a log cabin, and settled down to a lonely life, a wood wanderer, befriending Cairns, reading, keeping in perfect order a small garden. Mrs. Christian looks after him, mends his clothes, buys for him at Belport. The first month he was here he found Cairns drunk. He took him to his own home and kept him two months. He has never taken spirits since. Cairns told him the story of his having shown uncontrolled cowardice in the war. It was really very bad. It had ruined a sensitive character, lost him a fair property and an old boy-love. At last drink destroyed his last chance. Jones put him on my land to cut wood for him and for sale, presumably rental. Hapworth has educated his very competent mind and so these two miserable, self-exiled men have lived, shunning all others except the Christians. Of Norman's story Cairns knows nothing. Neither man came to see me, neither would. I myself went to see Hapworth twice."

Euphemia smiled, put on her glasses and said, "I should have supposed you would have ordered them off your land."

"And why?"

"Because you are a masterful man, used to being obeyed and respected. You are changed, John, curiously changed."

"Retreats are valuable, confession hateful."

"How did he seem to you when you called? Was he sane?"

"Sane, I should have said, but odd and uncivil.

Still he interested me. He would not have done so a year ago. There is more, but to cut it short, I was sure I had seen him at some time. It was true. I recalled his name at last and how he came to my works to ask help for a workman. I did not see him. Then I became curious and wrote to you. At that time a storm unroofed his house and very reluctantly I got him to come to me for a time. You know the rest. He still believes he killed his wife, or so I think, but he takes more interest in life and I fancy begins to doubt his delusion."

Again Euphemia looked at me with her perplexing smile. "And so here is John Sherwood in charge of an insane man and the queer human problem of a coward who is capable of an act of astonishing self-devotion. Really, John, you are an extraordinary person, but what do you mean to do with these pleasing companions? Both, I admit, are interesting and Norman a cultivated gentleman—and that poor sad wife. Have you written to her?"

"No, not yet. Cairns I shall care for. Christian I have given his little farm."

"Ah, indeed." I thought her smile cynical and the glasses were up.

"Of Hapworth—Norman—I must talk to Heath. Now you should go to bed. Be careful, Euphemia, about Norman—his name."

"Certainly. Do you not think him dangerous?"

"I do not, and he soon leaves us. Dodo will see to you. You like to breakfast in bed. Ask for what

you want. I may be away in the woods early. Good night."

I went to Heath's tent to see if he had been comfortably cared for by Dodo. He was awake and complaining of a neuralgic headache, which, as he said, was predictive of a storm. Dodo had already assured me that the Aurora was a sure sign of bad weather. Heath laughed at Dodo's prophecy, but was certain of his own unpleasant personal capacity to foretell such a change. He asked me if I had seen the *Belport Journal,* which had amused Euphemia by its article on Cairns. I said, I had not, but presumed it would naturally have been malicious; upon which I related Cairns' amiable interview with the editor. He, I thought, would revenge himself.

Heath said, "No, that fellow Grice will probably write a cynical, discrediting article, and then tear it up and obey the average editor's desire to tell the truth."

I had not seen the Journal, but from Euphemia's account, it was neither unkind nor malicious. Heath proved to be correct in his judgment, rather to Cairns' disgust, who would have preferred his enemy to have lied about him.

I left Heath with his headache and his reflections on newspaper moralities, and went to my own tent. There was still a faint remnant of the Northern Lights, and although the sky was clear, a smart northeast wind promised to justify both prophets of

wet weather. I went to bed, with much to think about, and I did think about it.

It was gray and foggy at dawn with a steady drizzling rain. Cairns had gone. I woke up Hapworth.

"Come, let us bathe and get off up the brook and take some trout for my cousin's breakfast."

He was more or less, less I thought than usual, in his morning mood of depression. He agreed in an uninterested way. The bath with no warm after-greeting from the sun seemed to rouse him. We dressed and went away up the stream. I declined to fish, pleading my inefficient personal equation, but Hapworth had great luck.

"I am pretty wet, it is most uncomfortable," he said at last. The unavoidable comic, the fool in every tragedy, was here, a man with the credit of murder on his soul complaining of the inconvenience of being wet.

I laughed at him and said, "Oh, I am soaked, too, but I want to see the spring again—the Earth Laugh. Find me the Indian name. I mean to have the pool cleared of dead leaves. They are choking the outlet."

"Dead leaves—dead leaves," he murmured.

"Yes. Walk fast. The ducking won't hurt you."

I strode away, he following after he had laid the rod and fish basket on the shore. The spring lost some of its gay beauty in the gray light and the drip of over-laden leaves. We discussed the clear-

ing of the pool and how to direct the overflow so as not to leave the ground a morass. He was now so lucid and intelligent, so reassuring that I came to a quick resolution. I turned on him, set a hand on each of his shoulders and said, "Hapworth, I have been to you—I have tried to be—what man should be to man in this wilderness. Your melancholy troubles me. What can I do for you?"

"Nothing." He remained facing me.

"What is that decision which you say has relieved you?"

"To surrender myself to justice."

And now that I was in I felt that I must go on.

"But why?" I asked.

"I killed my wife in a fit of jealousy. She was not innocent—"

"Stop here. Not a word more. You were out of your head. You were put in an asylum."

"Yes, to save me from the law."

"If you knew her to be alive and heard from her and saw her, what would you think?"

"Impossible! I tell you she is dead."

"But if, as they say, you feared arrest when in the asylum, why did you tell everyone you had killed her?"

"That is confusing. Did I?"

"Yes. And sometimes now you are in doubt. The whole thing is a wild delusion."

"Yes, for a time after I came here I was in doubt, but now I know." He put up his hands and gently

freed himself from my detaining grasp of his shoulders as he added, "You are very kind, but—" and then abruptly, "you know my name?"

"Yes, Benedict Norman. I saw you once or twice near my mills."

"I do not remember. Who told you all this?"

"No matter. I want to help you."

"Help me? No man can help me. As well might you be able to make these dead leaves green."

"You will not do anything rash without talking further to me? I think I have earned the right to ask it of you."

"I can make no promises."

"Think on what I have said. It is late. Let us go back to camp."

We walked homeward silent in the thin rainfall of an east wind. Of a sudden I heard him exclaim, "Well, of all the queer things. How abominable!" The trout were gone, the basket torn to fragments, the dainty nine ounce rod broken.

"A bear," I said. "Here are Mr. Bruin's footmarks."

Hapworth regarded the wreckage with so woeful an aspect that I roared with laughter. He said, "And such a rod, and a bluejay and rose hackle gone."

"Well hooked, no doubt, in Bruin's nose. That will make him scratch. Dodo will mend the rod." The contrasted moods puzzled me as well they might.

It was a sorry day for camp, but as the doctor was

now well I put him in oilers and left with him to walk up to see Tom Dagett just as Mrs. Christian arrived with Susan, both in hideous dark overcloaks of rubber. I heard later of that visit and of Susan. Hapworth went to his tent.

As we walked Heath and I talked of home things and my camp life and habits and would I like to have him overhaul me. I shouted, "No, no. I am well and I don't believe I ever had any tubercle, but you did me a vast service. I have discovered myself."

"What do you mean, John?"

"Well, my dear Harry, I have learned how to play. I have learned that life without steady work may content a man. I have discovered that pleasure may be found in giving. I used to give when Penryn or Euphemia wanted help for some one, but it was a mere perfunctory business. I have learned to find interest in men for what they are as characters, human mechanisms. By George, Heath, it was worth while to find what must have been the indistinct unvisited background of self somehow become the foreground. The most surprising thing of it all is that I am telling you all this."

"A little mixed, that metaphor," said Heath, "but really, you have justified the opinion I often expressed of you when—" and he hesitated. "Well, when men said you were a mere hard, money-making, very efficient machine and would come to be like Uncle Dick."

"That was a pleasing verdict. I 'll be blanked if I know how you knew I was not what men said."

"My dear John, every fellow has a background. Some never discover it, but it is part of my own professional business to find it and, at need, to light it up helpfully. Sometimes it is a spiritual discovery, a true revelation of character. You know that I am what is called orthodox and have a creed of conduct by which I try to abide. It has its place at times in the work of my profession."

"You are fortunate, but here is Tom Dagett, a character, and by the way I have for you a more difficult patient than I—this man Hapworth, a strange case, as you may have observed. I have purposely refrained from talking about him and waited to let you observe him. Your coming has been to me a vast relief. We will talk about him later. I have much to say. How are you, Tom? This is my friend and cousin, Dr. Heath."

"Pleased to see you. Come in. It 's twiddlin', no-account weather, neither man weather nor woman weather."

"Like some people," said Heath, much amused.

"Set down," said Tom. "It 's kind of fishy here. I like it. It smells of luck, but some folks don't like it. Susan Christian and her mother was here to-day. They won't bide here a minute. Ever hear them two sing? It 's like bein' in meetin'. They come through the woods singin' Coronation and Old Hundred. Folks call them pennyroyal Hymns."

"Pennyroyal!" exclaimed Heath. "Why do they call them that?"

"Mother told me, but I 've clean forgot. Fact is, the sea 's washed out of me a heap of things I used to know. I was minded of one of her stories yesterday when I come out of my door and saw one of them rangers pullin' in. I know the man. Seein' me, he sheered off."

"What 's a ranger?" asked Heath.

"Well, he 's a no-account man, like what land folks call a tramp. He cruises round in a boat and steals and he 's here to-day and there to-morrow."

"What was your mother's story?"

"Well, when I was a boy one of them rangers up from nigh Rocque Island, he come to my uncle's when he was off fishin'. When Uncle Bill come back his wife told him what that ranger done. That afternoon Bill just did n't say a word, but took to his sailboat and went away. When he come back, might of been a week, he told mother and no one else. He hunted that man way down to Isle au Haut. He found him drunk in his boat on the beach. He threw the oars and the mast out of the boat and shoved it off and towed it in half a gale 'bout nine miles to sea. There he cast it off and tacked round till the man's boat was all a wash and he so wet he sat up and was sober like. He saw he had no oars and cried out to Bill to help him. Bill come nigh so the man could hear, and says he, "I 'm Jane Simmons' husband," and then he just sailed

away and left him. Mother said Uncle Bill was a deacon and could n't on no account have killed the man. He just left him to the justice of God."

"He made pretty sure, Tom." The touch of what was for me tragic humor was not lost on Heath. He said it was a strange and interesting story.

Said Tom, "Don't see as it 's interestin'. It 's true."

Pleased with the distinction, I rose, asking Tom of the boat I had given his friend.

"She's fine, sir. Sails like a witch. You 'll be wantin' more lobsters and fish, I guess. Mrs. Christian says you 've got more folks at your camp."

"Yes," I returned, "and smaller lobsters, too."

As we moved away, Heath said, "Mr. Dagett has an eye on the main chance."

"I pay about double what he gets at Belport, but really I do not growl. Think of the meagreness of the lives of these people. I would rather give outright, but—"

"You do both, it seems."

"It amuses me."

"A queer name for it, you old humbug."

"Their quietly-accepted belief that I won't kick at being overcharged does amuse me, but not Dodo. I am quite willing to pay for my intimacies. In fact, Harry, there are in these lonely longshore people elements of human interest one does not meet in our turmoil of town life. The comradeship of the sea, and woods, and the limitations of more or

less isolated lives leave the individual more angular, less smoothed, more characteristical."

"Did you invent that word or find it here? I see that to you this life and these people are interesting, but you must somehow have manufactured the pleasure and then fallen in love with the product."

"That is not uncommon—one sees it. A rich man for some reason other than from charity makes his first large gift. His self-esteem rises and he goes on, decoyed by self-admiration, until the habit of giving becomes an appetite of self-esteem. I was weak and miserable when you discouraged my desire to come hither. Since I became well, I have found my horizons enlarging. People attract me as they never did except in the mass. More things interest me, the sea, the sky, the woods, the weather."

I hesitated and then added what I could have said to no other man and no woman except my cousin Euphemia, who would not have understood what I meant. "How far, Harry, are a man's morals and his relations to religious beliefs affected by his physical state?"

"What a bewildering question. I recall old Mr. Winsted's remarking casually that when he was well he was inclined to be free handed and give largely to charities, but he never would give or wanted to give if he was gouty. The other question I cannot answer."

"I understand that. I am happy. I want others to be so and, to be quite sincere, Harry, I do not want

my present entire satisfaction with life to be disturbed by the want of contentment in the people about me. It is a form of selfishness, I suppose."

"The test of selfishness is that it is willing to deprive others for personal ends. The quality of your own form of selfishness or the shape it assumes is rather rare. As my diagnosis sent you here, I ought to be credited with whatever good you do."

"A doctor, who preserves lives, good or bad, would have a queer moral credit account if he were responsible for the after-lives of his patients."

"Would he not. Think of it!"

"But to return to my question, I heard you say once that mere physical courage is somewhat dependent on the bodily state."

"Not quite that, but a grave wound, long lasting pain, a rattling fall from a horse, a railway accident, may for years deprive a man of what we agree to call nerve. Just what these things do to us, the explanation, is far to seek. There are lesser things that disturb the balance of normal control, those mysterious fears, the cat terror, the horse or dog or rose smell, the sight of blood—"

"Euphemia has that."

"A woman I knew acquired it on seeing a man she loved die of hemorrhage. At last all reds affected her and once at a theatre on the fall of a red curtain, she fainted."

"How did it, or did it ever end?"

"She was a woman of high character. She went

at last into a hospital and served in the surgical clinic until she cured the habit."

"That is interesting, but here we are. I want you to observe this man Hapworth sharply, then later I will tell you his story. I see Mrs. Christian on the cliff with Euphemia. Let us join them. Cairns has gone for a while. Hapworth is away in the wood. I have set him to work chopping wood for the tent stoves, for we have cold nights and Euphemia is apt to be cross if she is not kept warm."

"Ah," said Heath gaily, "that is another contribution to the art of preserving the minor moralities by coddling the body."

The petticoats were fluttering like flags in the sea wind as we came upon the three curiously contrasted women.

Euphemia was in one of her enthusiastic moods and was evidently on easy terms with Mrs. Christian and the handsome, rosy maid, Susan, to whom I duly presented my friend.

Mrs. Christian said to Dr. Heath, "So you have been to see Tom Dagett. When Tom has a chance to talk he makes up for lost time. The fact is, up here you don't get much chance to talk. You get to be silent."

"But has Tom no family?" asked Heath.

"No, his wife and children are dead and he must pass days without speech."

"But his wife talked enough, mother," said Susan.

"Well," said Mrs. Christian, "do you just remember that when you are married. Cairns, he 's a right silent man and you 'll be tempted."

"Oh, he can talk enough, mother."

"So it is settled, Susan," I said.

"So he says, sir." She was blushing. "I suppose he knows. He says, I do, too."

"Ah, here is Mr. Hapworth," said my cousin, putting on her glasses and considering with silent interest the slight form and thin delicate face of the clergyman.

"We are congratulating Susan, Mr. Hapworth."

"Cairns is a fortunate man," he returned gravely.

"Well, after all," said Mrs. Christian, "marrying, I tell Susan, is a kind of fishing venture. You never know what kind of fish you 've hooked till you 've got him in the boat."

Heath was delighted. "How then about the equality of the sexes, Mrs. Christian? Between the man and the fish, where is the equality?"

"Is n't any, sir. Major Browne, he says marriage is a republic or ought to be, but that 's bachelor wisdom—he 's got no experience."

To my amusement, Susan said quietly, "Oh, but mother, you ought to have asked him who would have the casting vote between the man and the fish?"

She was gay, quick witted, and as I found then and later, capable of unexpected cleverness. We broke into laughter. Susan looked shyly ashamed, while Heath exclaimed, "Casting vote? The chil-

dren, of course,'' upon which Susan fell to silent consideration of a hovering fish hawk.

Presently I arranged for Dodo to take Euphemia and Hapworth to sail after lunch and the doctor and I pleaded letters to be written. Hapworth excused himself. He must pile the wood he had cut. Evidently he was unwilling to sail, and we did not urge it.

We were now far on into July, with beautiful weather but in the woods a fierce army of mosquitoes and black flies with, worst of all, the midge, the pungee of Pennsylvania, possibly its Indian name. On this account, except in the early morning, the forest, despite its beauty, was out of the list of enjoyable things for Euphemia, but she became a quite fearless lover of the sea.

There was some unexpected delay about the shingles for Hapworth's roof and I felt forced to ask him to remain. He so quietly settled down as a guest that this easy assent added by its contrast to my feeling of doubt and insecurity concerning him. Then also Euphemia watched him far too much. For the rest, he was a quiet, courteous gentleman, subject to moody silences, or again falling at times into interesting and interested talk. I had purposely left Heath to make his own observations of Hapworth and he, though watchful, had as yet made no report.

Euphemia sailed, bothered Dodo about his cooking and amused herself with Mrs. Christian, who had

again a craving for books. Euphemia, after her way, wrote letters, many letters, but I had declined to humor her inclination for further talk about Hapworth and his wife and began to suspect her of a desire to interfere in a matter which was giving me thought which was presently increased in seriousness by a consultation with my doctor. I was more and more sure as time ran on that in my newly acquired interest in my fellowmen, I was facing a human problem far beyond my powers.

The story is tangled up in memory with many days of joyful life, and with now and then a startling, eventful talk, such as I had next day when after our bath at dawn, I took Heath away into the woods on pretence of visiting my spring.

He said, "How still these woods are. Ah, there is a squirrel at breakfast."

"Yes," I said, "he chooses always an open space that no lurking enemy may surprise him unseen."

"It is curious to see you, of all men, acquiring the art of minute observation of men and nature. With me it is part of my professional outfit."

"I am only making use of a quality I have always employed for practical purposes."

"I see." He went on up the brook in what I had come to feel as the most solemn time, the day spring of dawn.

Heath seemed to be sharing my unspoken thought, for he said, "Oh, Jack, how wonderful!" as of a sudden long lines of light flashed through the forest

maze, girdling the trees with golden light and leaving here and there untouched in shadow the trunks of delicate purple.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, for now I led him around the rocks and into the open mossy space, where the vast outrush of the spring leaped into the pool. Heath looked a moment at this generous constancy of giving and turned to me with a faint smile of appreciative pleasure. He had a way of waiting for me to say something, or that does not quite state what I mean. It was a way he had of just saying, "Well, John?"

I said simply what had been in my mind as he spoke, "Oh, more than anything else, more than the sea or the forest, this spring appeals to me as if with a definite personality. As I state it, Harry, it appears to me absurd, but it is real; an affection for a gush of water! To see it utilized, piped away would give me pain."

"Well, and why?"

"Because it would destroy beauty to save some man toil or to make money for him and others."

"Well, go on. You are an amazing person."

"I do not see why you say that."

"Oh, go on."

"I was about to say that a spring like this is a symbol and, this is Hapworth's thought: 'When in the ages man discovered the playmate Fancy, and her statelier sister Imagination, he must have found delight as in some live thing, in the wonder of this

perpetual birth of purity.' I made a note of it, as interesting.''

''And does this moody tenant of yours feed you often with this kind of food?''

''At times, and usually he is a pleasantly cultivated man, not out of the ordinary.''

''Oh, very much out of the ordinary. You have a queer menagerie and really are you not unwise to perplex and bother yourself and plan to help this man and that?''

''You do not think so.''

''No, I do not, but you are to me so changed a man, John, that—well, the great cyclones, the earthquakes of life, a great love, a great sorrow, above all the recognition of—but that is the kind of thing you will never let me talk of and about which talk with another is usually of no effect. What has come into your life, I do not know. If it were a woman, I could understand it, but, my dear fellow, let me say that you are becoming what the American man often is and dislikes to be told he is, sentimental.''

I laughed outright. ''Go on. You can not scare me on the ground of sentiment—anything else?''

''Well, Jack Sherwood, you are wholesomely spiritualized.''

I knew it to be true. I might not have so stated it or just as he put it, but I knew that on the whole, he was right. I was silent for a time, watching the endless flow of the spring.

"I hope," said Heath, "that you do not feel me to have overstepped the modesties of friendship or that I said a too intrusively intimate thing." This was very like him.

"Oh, no. No, Harry. It is—" I was silent. "I can not define to my satisfaction some of the changes in my mental attitudes. But now I want to talk about Hapworth. It is hard to get a chance in the camp. Let us sit here and I will ask your advice. I will cut short a long story."

"Not too short."

"When I settled here this man refused to call on me and made clear that I must respect his will to be alone. Jones spoke of him as paying rent and as eccentric. I learned later that he had helped his neighbors in various ways. When a storm unroofed his house I asked him to accept my camp shelter. Here is his reply. I purposely brought it with me."

Heath read it. "Well, what next? It is odd enough."

"He accepted, as you see. I soon found that I had as guest a man in occasional fear of something. When I called on him earlier, I was sure I had seen him at some time. At last I got it. He was a clergyman who once asked help of me for a sick man. I did not see him then. What he was doing here for two years, why he came, interested me. I wrote to ask my cousin to find out for me what she could about him. His name as it came to my recollection

was in fact Benedict Norman. What is the matter, Heath?" I had seen a look of startled surprise. "Do you know him?" I asked.

"I have never seen him before. Go on and I will explain my surprise when you have done. Tell me all."

"Certainly. Here is Euphemia's letter."

He read it twice with care. "Ah, the sad little woman. Let me, as a doctor, consider this coldly. It is a too familiar story, belief without cause in his wife's being unfaithful, threat to kill her, a shot that misses, delusion at last that he had killed her. He is committed to an asylum, with still the firm belief of being a murderer."

"Yes. It is like a mad dream."

"Are not our dreams brief insanities? He tells everyone what he did and yet fears arrest. It is of course like the contradictions of a dream. The fear of arrest drives him into escaping. How he wandered hither no one knows and now he has, or may have, remorse and thinks he will surrender himself to the law. Then he hesitates, is in and then out of his dream, so to speak."

For a moment Heath was silent in thought and at last added, "You say he has really educated that clever Susan and saved from drunkenness the man who did him and another human being the cruel thing of saving this morbid life."

"Another, you say. What other?"

"His wife."

"Oh, yes, his wife. I see."

"One gets, John, a great respect in my profession for the complexities of this machine, a man. I wonder how many little corner closets of delusion are sedulously kept locked by men whose lives seem commonplace. I have known some such cases; one of them in one of the great soldiers, one in a merchant of importance. Through years of the ablest competition in large affairs, he believed in a conspiracy to steal from him certain papers. It resulted in a small rather tragic incident, and his delusion became widely known. This man has the indecisiveness of his malady."

"Let us get back to him. What course should I take?"

He did not answer me, but remarked, "Euphemia knows then all that you know? Be sure there was more, a background."

"Perhaps but now you know all I know, Heath. Oh, not quite. I brought him here one day and frankly faced him with a commonsense statement of his folly. I scarcely shook his belief."

"I presume not. Have you a cigarette, John? Ah, I have my case. A match, please. Let me think a little."

I too sat still as the light of morning illumined the dim wood spaces and the endless babble of the spring went on, while I sat reflecting on the words of my friend.

He said at last, "I must not venture now to advise

you. I wish the man were safe in an asylum, but that is not easily possible. Will Euphemia keep her hands off of this case? She thinks she has missions and her pursuit of this matter may be as full of peril as some other missions."

"Good gracious, I will speak to her. I thought of that, but forgot it for a time. You had something else to say to me, or I so inferred."

"Yes. Some five years ago at Chilton Springs, I fell into a circle of pleasant Maryland people. Among them was an ex-Confederate general, Maynard, and his daughter. He fell ill and, in taking care of a very grave case, I came into easy and purely friendly relation with Miss Maynard, a girl of admirable character. After he grew better, they went to Italy where they met Norman. On the general again falling ill, she wrote to get from me for his doctors, an earlier account of his rather obscure case. Several letters were exchanged, some of which Mr. Norman, who had been very attentive to the general, may have seen. She married the clergyman, as I heard, and her father died. I never saw Mr. Norman and neither of him nor of her have I heard a word. Now these two people suddenly reappear in my life. If I can help her and him, I will do it, but—the but is a large one—the man is dangerous."

"Do you really think so?"

"Yes, I am sure."

"I suppose I dwell too hopefully on the obvious pleasant qualities of the man, his courteous ways, his

intelligence, his cultivation. Mrs. Christian gave me some really good verse he wrote and I picked up here these lines in his writing the day after my frank talk with him. How can a man be so possessed and be lucid enough to write like this? I brought them with me as a part of his case. Remind me to show you the other verse."

"Let me see the verse you brought." He read it with care.

> I am a child of the earth's dark caverns,
> Here to find a voice.
> Out of the depths I come,
> Out of the darkness flowing,
> Nor whence nor whither knowing.
> I babble as babbles a man
> With his dream of ever living
> To be one with the sea of hereafter.
> Sport of elemental laughter,
> Rain am I, dew am I,
> Born but to live and die
> Into the earth anew.

"Strange enough, John. Rather better stuff than some of these paranoiac cases manufacture. The other verses?"

"Oh, quite different, far better."

"Let us go home. Ah, the poor little lady. I shall watch Norman. I wish for your sake he were not here." I walked homeward troubled in mind.

The days ran on. Hapworth, as I shall continue to call him, was at times silent, at times agreeably

talkative and evidently found relief in his incessant use of the axe. Cairns came and went, while Mike, Euphemia, Heath and I sailed and fished, as the days of July ran on into August. My strange guest, to my embarrassment, showed no signs of desire to leave my camp. In fact, his house was still uninhabitable. Meanwhile, I waited upon whatever decision Heath might reach, and observed that Hapworth now and then stared at Heath in a way which was so notable as to trouble me.

One day we were at anchor fishing off Gull Rock and pulling up the cod fish with success when Euphemia said to me, "Did Christian take my letters to Belport yesterday?"

"Yes," I said, "of course. He comes for them every other day. They were mailed this morning. He comes for the mail in the afternoon and takes it to Belport next morning."

For a few moments my cousin took no notice of the obvious hints the cod were conveying through her line.

"You have a bite," I said. "Quick! pull up!" She was so evidently far from the practical business of the hour that, knowing her well, I connected her absent-mindedness with her letter. I had at once a misgiving, and said, "I hope, cousin, you have not been writing to Mrs. Norman?"

"I have," she said defiantly. Heath looked up. "You men seem to have just let the poor wife drop. It appeared to me—"

"What!" said Heath. "You surely have not written to her, Euphemia!"

"I have. As a woman I felt it to be my duty."

"The devil!" exclaimed Heath.

"You are disrespectful, Harry, impertinent."

"Cousin," I said, "you had no right to interfere. What did you write? You promised not to interfere with me."

"I have not. I knew her mother long ago. While you were thinking of the man, no one gave a thought to the woman. If I am not free to write to whom I please I will go home tomorrow."

"You can't," said I.

"How did you know," said Heath, "that no one gave a thought to Mrs. Norman. Of late I have thought of little else."

"Indeed!" exclaimed Euphemia, and put on her glasses. "Did you ever know her, Harry?"

"Yes, I did. Years ago I met her and her father at Chilton Springs, a most charming young woman." He threw a large haddock into the boat, which always singularly excited Mike. "One for me," he said.

"And I," cried Euphemia, "a big one. Good gracious!" A huge, unwary lobster held on just long enough to tumble over the gunwale at Euphemia's feet.

" 'Ware ankles!" I cried, too late, as she drew herself up, lost her balance and fell backwards, her august petticoats in bewildering confusion, with Mike

gallantly attacking the immodest lobster. Heath caught the tail of the foe and set her free as Euphemia screamed, for the operative procedure was crude. I pulled up the not light weight of the angry dame. Very red she was. Heath threw the lobster into the fishbox, whither Mike pursued his vendetta with disastrous consequences. Euphemia rearranged her skirts. That we did not laugh, as she no doubt expected, must I think, go to our credit on the books of some recording social angel.

She searched in vain for her glasses and failing turned upon Heath. "When you allowed this disgraceful accident to occur, Harry, I was about to state that I merely wrote to Mrs. Norman that something had been heard of her husband. It will relieve her mind until—"

"Just a moment, Cousin," I said. "Did you say where you were, or mention my name?"

"I did not mention you. I did not give your address. Do you think I am a fool, John Sherwood?"

"What paper did you use?"

"Your camp paper, of course, but," triumphantly, "I inked out the heading 'Camp Retreat.' There!"

"But," said Heath, "it was mailed at Belport, I suppose?"

"Of course. Where else could it be mailed?"

"The woman is no fool," said Heath. "She is sure to find us." I glanced at Heath as Euphemia felt again for her too helpful lost glasses, but made no comment. We were silent. The cod were biting.

"My foot hurts me, John. I hope I shall not be poisoned, Harry. I must go home at once; at once."

I pulled up the killick and set sail. Everybody, including Mike, seemed to be indisposed to talk. We were soon in camp. Mike retired to Dodo for sympathy and Cousin Euphemia went limping on Heath's arm to her tent. She was very cross when I explained to her more fully that she had made it easy for Mrs. Norman to find us and Norman. She refused to admit it, but promised not to send a second letter.

"You see, John, I meant to break it to her by degrees. If you had consulted me and come to some decision—"

"Good heavens, Cousin, what was there to decide? As soon as we do come to a decision, we will take some distinct action."

"I think Harry makes too much of the case. I have no doubt this man was once insane, now he has moods, to be sure, but really who can see that he is other than just a man with a sad past? I wash my hands of the whole business. I wish you would ask Harry to attend to my foot."

The doctor came at my call and told her what was true and restored her good humor, that she had a ridiculously small foot and perfect, and that the lobster had left nothing worse than a bruise. Her imprudence left with us an added anxiety.

As usual we made some change of dress for dinner for in a camp one is apt to get into lazy ways. Hap-

worth was always in simple gray and Euphemia in some plain dinner dress. As we waited for her and Hapworth I said to Heath, "Keep Euphemia in a good humor to-day. We have not done with her but no more letters shall go. I will see to that. She will find some excuse to write to someone if not to Mrs. Norman. I can not rob all her mail."

I remember how pretty was the tent that evening at the dinner hour with the candles sheltered from draughts by the tall old-time glass screens Dodo had brought with him. The smallness of this white-walled dining-room seemed to bring us into social nearness.

Hapworth, who was always latest and usually able to offer some pleasant excuse, sat down without a word. It was serious to me that a man clearly well bred could so easily accept my hospitality and now and then forget the habitual courtesies of life. I observed in him what Heath said was common to the morbidly absent-minded, that there is little guard kept on the features. He said further, what struck me as interesting, that normally acquired success in governing visible display of feeling was a great safeguard against yielding to a sudden storm of emotion and even to prolonged moods. I saw now, as Hapworth sat down, that he had again the occasional look of watchful suspicion.

Cousin Euphemia was in high spirits. Her ways were difficult to predict or explain.

"I am entirely well, Dr. Heath," she said.

"That poor lobster," I said. "Why should the innocent suffer?"

"If you dare, John!"

"How did you do it, Harry, this sudden cure?"

"Oh, I quoted for a charm the only verse in English about the lobster.

"Hudibras-Butler," said Hapworth without looking up.

"Suppose we drop a very disagreeable subject," rejoined Euphemia in her conclusive way, just as Dodo, entering, said. "Lobster chowder, Miss Phemy." We all laughed, of course, except my sober guest.

"Are you morally capable of devouring your enemy?" cried Heath.

"I never eat it! It disagrees with me."

"It seems to me," I said, "that you began the disagreement by cultivating a perilous acquaintance. You might keep up the vendetta."

"I never eat it, Harry. I consider it suicidal."

"That becomes serious," laughed Heath.

"Life," said Hapworth, "is one prolonged suicide, moral and physical. Day by day we reinforce decay."

Heath glanced at the set sad face and Euphemia felt for her lost glasses.

"I take pity on you, Cousin," I said quickly. "Dodo found your pince-nez in the boat."

"Your terrible summary of life," remarked Heath, "has been said, Mr. Hapworth, in many ways. Nothing is original. I doubt even original sin."

"At least Cain was original," said Hapworth. "He invented murder." I saw a look of horror come over Euphemia's face.

"We are not very gay," I said.

"Gay!" murmured Hapworth. He appeared to be lost to all around him, self-absorbed.

Heath looked uneasy and said, "We need that lobster again."

"Harry!" exclaimed Euphemia.

We laughed, and eager to shift the talk, I said, "Well, we won't tell it at home. Was Mrs. Christian here yesterday, Cousin?"

"Oh, yes," she returned, pleased to be on firmer ground. "She asked me to go to church to-day, which is, I believe, Sunday. Time seems to have quite forgotten us here. I told her there was no Church at Belport and that I was a Catholic." Euphemia cleverly rendered Mrs. Christian's amazement. " 'Well, now, I never, and you 're a Romanist!' I tried to explain that there was only one church."

"I should like to have heard that preachment. What did she say?"

Euphemia hesitated.

"Well?"

"She did say, 'The Churches, I do hear, have too many trimmings. I don't go with that. Didn't Christ say, Where two or three are gathered together there I am? There don't seem to be anything more needed.' "

"In My name," added Hapworth.

"Yes," said Euphemia. "I told her what that really meant and then I asked her what her sect was. She said, 'Baptist, and you just ought to hear our preacher. He 's good and long, but we pick wild caraway seed and chew it. That does keep you awake. Most all the old women chew caraway in meeting.' Think of that, John. I shall try it on you, when you talk science to Harry."

Hapworth alone remained unamused and now looking up, said, "When two or three are gathered together. What two or three? Any two or three? Judas, Nero, Pontius Pilate?"

"In His name? Hardly," said Heath gravely. Hapworth made no reply.

Euphemia looked the annoyance she felt. With all my charity for an insane man whose society I had courted, I felt concerned about what these reminding outbreaks of ingenious eccentricity of thought must inflict on Euphemia. I saw her lips move slightly and that she crossed herself, as I said, "I think Heath has answered you, Hapworth."

He flushed slightly and with recovery of his entirely courteous way, said, "You must pardon me, Miss Swanwick," and then looking down as if in soliloquy, "the wind of thought bloweth where it listeth."

"And the tongue," laughed Heath, "is its weathercock. Thanks for that chance, Mr. Hapworth."

Hapworth made no comment and Euphemia broke the next moment of silence in an awkward effort to

deal with a disagreeable situation. "I forgot to tell you a delightful story and I really must."

"Let us have it," I said, pleased at any relief.

"It was apropos of Dodo, who had not blacked my walking-boots because the blacking was all used and none to be had in Belport."

She was presently my amusingly humorous Mrs. Christian, "My Peter has gifts as a hearer. He does rest his tongue a good deal."

"He may have acquired the habit," said Heath, "through the tyranny of domestic circumstances."

"That," I said, "is Tom Dagett's view of the case. Tom says, 'Christian and his wife 's like the sea and me. Mrs. Sea does all the talk and I 've got not to answer back.' "

"If," said Euphemia, "you interrupt my conversation with Mrs. Christian, I—but, by the way, what is what they call here her spoken name? I was desired to use it, but then she was carried away on a flood of praise of Mr. Sherwood and forgot to tell me. She says you—"

"You may leave me out, Euphemia. Her name, if you please, is Caressa."

"Not really?" cried Heath. These names that commit the baby to impossible attainments may be rather cruel.

"She is still very handsome," said Euphemia meditatively.

We laughed and my cousin said, "I do not see that I said anything amusing. Am I to have the

floor or not?'' Again she was Mrs. Christian. ''You see, Miss Euphemia— Now that is a queer name, yours, is n't it? I had just to keep saying it to keep it in mind. When we came here nigh on to twenty years ago a man from New York was here about some land titles and he boarded with us a week. Lord, the brushes and things he had. After three days he says to Peter, 'I put out my boots three nights and no one has touched them.'

'' 'Well,' says Peter, 'we 're honest up here. Why, you might of put out your watch and no one would have touched it.' Then that man explained and John said he 'd attend to it and next day those boots were right well greased with axle grease like Peter's. You ought to have seen that man.'' We all laughed but Hapworth, who was evidently far away in thought.

Nevertheless, I felt that Euphemia had helped us.

''I saw,'' said Heath, ''that you lent her the Imitation of Christ. What did she say of it? She is apt to have some unusual critical comment on books.''

''You may well call this one unusual, Harry. She said, 'Now that book is just lovely and childlike. Guess it did n't take much trouble to write. Could n't say I liked it. I don't like imitations.' ''

''What did you say?'' asked Hapworth, again interested.

''That you will never know,'' returned my cousin.

I said, rising, ''Coffee, Euphemia?''

''No. I am for bed. Good night.''

I left Heath with his segar in my day tent, which I may not have said, was used on account of its large size for meals when my camp party increased in number. To the right of it was my night tent and beyond it, Hapworth's. To left Heath was lodged and Euphemia beyond him.

The darkening night promised the easter Dodo confidently predicted. I went with Euphemia to her tent, as was my custom at night, while Hapworth went out on the rock and stood looking at the uneasy sea.

Said Euphemia, "John, I am afraid I can not stand this any longer. You are very much to be blamed for not telling me beforehand not to write to—"

"Hush!" I said. "Be careful."

"Well, to her."

This was, as Heath liked to say, Euphemial.

"My dear Cousin, really—"

"I wish to explain—" on which I cried, "Good night," and fled, laughing.

As I was about to rejoin Heath, Hapworth came from the rock and said, "May I say a few words to you?"

I went with him where to my surprise he led me far into the wood. Here he turned towards me. "I am going early to-morrow to my house to put things in order. I shall come over in the afternoon to say good-bye. I have been too long an intruder on your hospitality. I am going on Tuesday to Baltimore to give myself up. I do not wish to be misunderstood,

at least by you. I was right to kill her. And the man, I know. He thinks no one knows—that man." Leaning towards me, he hissed a word between his teeth, "Heath, he too must die. Heath, curse him!"

Nothing in life thus far so affected me as this sudden outburst of homicidal intention. "Heath?" I said, "Nonsense! If you dare to use my cousin's name in connection with this insane delusion, I assure you, sir, you will get into trouble. Neither he nor I are very patient men. You had better be careful."

He looked about him with sudden timidity and exclaimed, to my amazement, "Do you think so?" He was like a scared child.

"Yes, I do, and as for Mrs. Norman, you are cruelly deluded. Heath and she never met after she went to Europe."

"Ah, but there were letters, letters, and, my God, before, before we married, proof of their guilt, damning proof." He spoke with the earnestness of absolute belief.

I said, "Don't you dare to talk that way of my cousin. What nonsense!"

"No, it is true! It is horribly true. She has paid the penalty of her sin and his sin. She is dead." Then he paused and looked around him in the dark wood shadows. I, too, was silent until he added, "He is alive and she is dead. You don't know about it—about these two. I do—I have proof."

"Proof," I cried. "What of? Nonsense!" I was at the end of my patience.

He became of a sudden quietly earnest. "I want you to believe me. Of course, you don't know as I do. There are ways, things, voices you cannot hear, by day and by night telling me what to do." He turned without a word more and left me standing in the forest, an astounded man, unconscious of a sudden patter of heavy rain on the tents behind me and the roar of the rock-beaten surf. A moment later I followed him slowly. For the time I had been appalled. Now I reflected on the childish simplicity of this abrupt revelation of an intention to kill made to the man most likely to thwart it. I had had a look into the terrible abyss of an insane mind. I quickened my pace. Hapworth had disappeared.

I went into the dinner tent where the threatened man was writing a letter. "Come into your own tent, Heath." He followed me.

Heath looked at me. "What 's up, John?"

I told him frankly what Hapworth had said. He took this amazing charge of adultery and the threat of murder with tranquillity not shared by me. I presume that I made my anger plain to him for, after hearing me quietly, he said, "John, this is not a matter for anger. I told you this man was dangerous. I could not predict how he would break out. Certainly the charge against this innocent young wife is the worst of his madness. You must have known her to understand what she has surely suffered."

"I am sorry for her," I said.

"And for him," returned Heath, "for him."

"Can you explain his delusion in any way, its origin, I mean?"

"Sometimes we can trace a delusion back to an apparently inadequate cause, or, as here, we can find nothing to explain it, and you can not predict what he may do. A man like Norman may seem to the every day layman rational and to-morrow he stops some stranger and says, 'You called me a bastard,' and shoots him. These men are as dangerous as a stick of dynamite in the hands of a boy. I sent to the Italian physician, at Miss Maynard's request, an inclosure about General Maynard's case. As I recall it two or three letters passed. Then she married and I received a very curt note from Mr. Norman asking me to correspond in the future with the physician under cover to him, Norman. I thought it rude and very singular. Now I see that it may have marked the beginning of his delusion. We have come to the explosive consequences. I told you, I think, of my acquaintance with the young woman, but not of Norman's letter."

"Well, he is going away. I am sure of that. It is a relief to get rid of him. How it is raining!" I was becoming more and more uneasy.

"Yes, he says he is going, but he has not gone. I hope he will not change his mind. In Baltimore he would at once be put back in the asylum. My fear, John, my deadly fear has been of Mrs. Norman's coming or of their meeting elsewhere. I am

sure that she will come soon or late. Pray God it be late, and after he has gone. Confound Euphemia! She may have made terrible mischief."

"I am sure he will go, Harry, and this storm will prevent any one coming from Belport for two days or more."

"You can't be sure of his going. You can be sure of nothing in regard to Norman except that he is just now as deadly as a cobra. The storm is a welcome friend. I understand my own danger. It is perhaps great. You or any one might have been the chosen victim. He has now or may develop at any moment a wild homicidal tendency, but I do not mean to take any madman risks unprepared. I shall be on my guard while he is here. Have no uneasiness about me."

"But I have, and shall have, until he is gone. Why not sleep in my tent to-night? I shall feel easier."

He stood for a moment in thought and then returned: "You may be right." He took down a revolver, threw in loads, picked up his blankets and hastily followed me to my tent through a fury of wind-driven rain. We sat down for a while and smoked in silence. At last he said, "I have given you just now the impression that I would kill this madman if it became a question of his life or mine. I should not have even thought it." He put the revolver on my table. "I would take many risks rather than hurt that poor fool. He has no arms?"

"I think not, but I can not be sure, Harry."

"Well, he is a feeble little man and if he is unarmed he is hardly to be feared. Listen to the wind!" He threw open the tied tent front and looked out. "What a pretty effect!"

Dodo's care provided at night a large head-light lantern fastened to my red oak. What now pleased Heath was the flash of flitting gold as the large rain drops passed through the brilliant cone of the lantern's illumination. As he closed the canvas he said, "There 's a light in Hapworth's tent."

"He often reads half the night," I said.

"What does he read?"

"All manner of books. Mrs. Christian says mostly on Sundays Revelation, on which she remarked with irreverent comment that it don't seem so very revealing."

Again Heath looked out. "What a wild night. How the tent shivers! He must be in bed. His light 's out." He reclosed the canvas and filled his pipe. "Match, please."

"It is time we were in bed."

"Not I, John." The evident uneasiness of a man whose courage I once saw tested when he stopped a runaway pair of horses infected me with like distrust of my demented guest. I tacitly signalled my acceptance of Heath's unwillingness by filling the pipe I had just emptied and we sat down again, while the canvas flapped and the rain hummed anew on the over-cover of the tent.

I never have seen Heath as I saw him that night. At last he said, "Why the deuce don't you talk. You think I am anxious? I am, and I shall be until this maniac is disposed of and his wife safe. I have handled too many human explosives to feel easy just now." He walked about the limited tent room, talking. He was impatient. "I wish Euphemia were not here."

I tried to talk trifles, of our boy days, and recalled that famous iceboat. It did not succeed. He answered in monosyllables. At last I said, "I think we are hoodooed." He laughed and I fell back, as was inevitable, on talk of the man who was to be pitied and feared.

"Is it, Harry, that this man was born doomed to this miserable insanity? Could he have saved himself? Is there, was there any physical and mental self-insurance possible, any predictive signs in his youth?"

"I do not know. Give me the boy, the lad, his surroundings and ancestry and I might guess—or might not, probably could not. When did you begin to tackle such questions, you of all men?"

"It grew out of personal interests and thought of this unlucky fellow. Since my own illness I have speculated in the freedom of ignorance as to why some people live to be old and in constant health of mind and body. What physical insurance was there on which, for instance, I failed to pay the premiums?"

Harry laughed. "To live to be old and yet effi-

cient? The receipt is, 'Have a talent for living and don't bury it.' "

"Oh, but seriously, Harry."

"Go on, Doctor," rejoined Heath, smiling.

"Well, if we knew all of a man at birth, all you mention, could we not foresee at least his physical failure as life went on?"

"How could we know all? Your 'if' is a large one. To follow on with your speculation, it may be that in some men from birth there waits a material fate in the organs, or in some one organ of the body, like an actor behind the scenes, ready to take his tragic part in the drama called life. Any clever M. D. could have foretold that disease would attack you soon or late. There is a text of St. Paul on which many medical sermons could be preached. He was more largely wise than he knew, which may define genius."

"As usual, Harry, you are getting out of my depth and I do not read St. Paul."

"And yet you like the essayists!"

"St. Paul an essayist! Well, really—"

"Yes, but look up the text or, not to bother you, it is, 'The head cannot say to the feet, I have no need of thee.' "

"That is clear enough and now I understand and can preach the sermon for myself."

"Yes. You did need it once, not now."

"You were rather too medically mystical for me. It might please Euphemia."

"No, she would not like it at all. Talk of disease

or death scares her. I did not mean to be mystical. We are only trying to reason from rather misty premises."

"Then let us go to bed and dream answers. I said bed, but I do not mean it. We must one of us be on guard to-night. You will watch. Call me at two. Hark, there goes Dodo's clock. It is twelve. You will surely call me at two."

"I will. Bon voyage on the ocean of sleep." He blew out the candle. I lay down dressed but remained wide awake. At two he did call me with a touch on my arm.

"What is it?" I sat up.

"Nothing. I suppose I am possessed to-night. We will laugh over it to-morrow. Wake me at dawn for a dip in the sea." He threw himself on the lounge, saying good night, and slept as I had not done.

I did not lie down but sat in the darkness thinking over my past life and the tragic possibilities of Mrs. Norman's too probable visit and then of Norman's wild decision; and after he left, what then? About three the patter of rain on the tent ceased. As I was intensely on guard I thought I heard some movement in the stillness of the now quiet night. I rose and looking through the interspace of the tent folds saw Hapworth, fully dressed, crossing the cone of light from the lantern. He looked about him and as he moved I saw, to my horror, the light flash from a wood axe he carried. He passed me and, putting my

head out, I saw him open the canvas of Heath's tent and disappear. I picked up the revolver and quickly returned to my watch. My fear was now for Euphemia and I released the tent ties. I was to be ready in case of need. He came out, stood a moment as if bewildered, made a step or two towards my Cousin Euphemia's tent and then threw down the axe and went slowly back to his own tent.

Before dawn I heard Hapworth moving. He was gone when I wakened Heath. "All right," I said, "but wait a moment." I went to Dodo's tent and called him. I said, "Be busy about the front of the tents until I come back,' and do not leave them a moment."

"Yes, sir." Dodo asked no questions when given an order.

"Come, Harry," I said. "The surf is glorious. What a grand sea! Come out to the cliff before we bathe."

It was in fact what Dodo called a Sunday sea. Why, he did not know. It was perhaps picked up in the Navy. It meant, and that was plain, a boisterous sea, very splendid as we saw it in the rose glow of the morning light. Swift currents and the perplexing tideway of the bay made huge disorderly billows which met wind-winged ranks of charging waves. I had never before seen this. The two armies of tormented waters crashed together and tumbled and met again and again and rolled in on the rocks thunderous with at last a shower of spray which an-

swered all the purposes of a morning bath. We fled laughing to the tents.

"What fool man left that axe out here to get rusty?" said Dodo.

"You might have forgotten it," I said.

He took me seriously. "No, sir. That 's Mr. Hapworth's axe. He went away before you was up. He took one of his bags, said he 'd be back to-night for the other. Didn't want any help when I said I 'd carry his dunnage."

"Did he say just when he would return?"

"No, sir. He 's crazy, that man. I 'm glad he 's going." After dressing, we went again on to the rock, keeping a more respectful distance, and watched the ever-fascinating spectacle of a storm-driven ocean.

"There will be no Mrs. Norman here to-day," said Heath.

"No. And I trust not to-morrow, in fact, not at all, I hope. Even a man would not care to sail over here in that sea."

"She will come," he said confidently, "but something has delayed her. Could she drive up and walk through the woods?"

"No, no," I said, "hardly. Come in before breakfast. I must go and get my sleep. I had none last night."

Euphemia rarely appeared at breakfast. Just now she was presumably engaged in what she called her morning meditations. They were audible at times, but to me at least incomprehensible. Then I

had my delayed chance of telling Heath my rather grim story of the night. He took it very quietly.

"Your insisting on my sharing your tent probably saved my life. I wish we were surely rid of that man. If after he has left, Mrs. Norman should come, we must keep her. Somehow we must keep them apart until he is in some way cared for."

"We will keep her," I said. I saw and shared his anxiety and felt relieved that we might not have to meet the consequences of Euphemia's meddling.

The day was clear, with a norther still blowing wholesome with the freshness of the snowy northland, a great roaring Viking wind. This morning Euphemia appeared at breakfast. You never could tell what she would do.

"Another plate, Dodo," I said.

"The chipmonks were holding a riotous camp-meeting on my tent last night," said my cousin.

"That is unusual on these stirring nights."

"Thought you had a fancy for monks," said Heath.

"That is a very meagre joke, Harry, and impertinent!"

"I like meagre jests, Cousin." They played a gay game of small talk, everyone feeling the uplift of the dry north wind and the absence of Norman.

No sailing was desirable for man or woman; but the surf was of a never-ending, changeful splendor as the tide grew to full of flood. Euphemia was never bored, and needed no attention. The day wore on with the usual routine until after lunch, when Mrs.

Christian appeared, about four o'clock, with wild strawberries, and Euphemia took her away at once to her tent for a talk I would have liked to have heard.

Heath and I lingered in the dining tent, lazily smoking, and at last I said, "Did it ever occur to you that Cousin Euphemia has at present her usual confident hopes of a convert?"

"Oh, yes, John. It is a favorite game with the cousin and she plays it badly—but she plays it."

"I suppose, Harry, you know nothing of what took Euphemia away from the church of our own people?"

"No, I, of course, know nothing. It was long before I came to the city. It made a needless row in the family."

I said, after a moment's reflection, "She would be a good woman in any church. What captured her was the mystical. The more of it the better, and yet the simplest belief is hard enough for some of us. When century after century added more mysteries to the simplicities of an earlier day they found some appetite in man for that which the few found hard to digest. Some nations have found it so."

Heath, as I went on speaking, looked at me with increasing attention. I ceased, aware that I was on ground we had never moved over together.

He said, as I pondered, "Well, well, Jack?" which in fact is interrogative, although no dictionary says so.

"I was about to say that it is explained by the fact

that Euphemia's early friends were among the emigrés Catholic French, to one of whom she went to school. Some people drift through life, some people sail or are towed. Euphemia drifts."

"Or now and then steams," laughed Heath.

"Euphemia drifts, now and then she sails a little and very rarely steams."

"What you say of her as fascinated by the mystical is true. She has tentacles of eager faith out in loving search of the mystical. Did you notice how at once she accepted the less obvious explanation of poor Norman's day dream at Assisi?"

"Yes, it was she who said it was St. Francis and in her really childlike way that it ought to make Norman a Catholic."

"She got her answer," said Heath. "As one sees the religious movements of the day nothing is more surprising to men at anchor than the continuous drifts from sect to sect, to and fro, and, as I said, our cousin drifted and is amazed that others cannot."

"But," I returned, "more wonderful to me are the single text sects or in the greater churches, the idolatry of forms. One may like them but they can never be for me essentials. They are for some men. Over them all rises the peasant Christ, from whose divine simplicities were born as the ages ran on these myriad-minded ways of interpreting Him.

"Go on," said Heath.

"No," I said, rising. "This is matter for talk at night when no sunshine invites the mind to lazily

loiter. You may be at ease," I cried laughing, "about Mrs. Christian; not John Knox were more easy to convert and we are secure too of Mrs. Norman's absence. Few men and no woman would care to cross that sea to-day. But wait a moment." I called Dodo. "We are going to see Dagett," I said. "Keep to the camp while we are away and if Mr. Hapworth returns, be watchful." Dodo expressed no surprise. "You understand me?"

"Yes, sir."

"Would you rather not leave the camp, Harry?" I said.

"Why not? We shall be back in an hour. Come, John."

We went away up the beach for a time in silence. As we paused to look at an unusually lofty billow, the spray rainbow-crowned, Harry said, gravely, "In all the years I have known you and often as we have talked, never before have we got on to the subject of religions."

"No, Harry. Men rarely talk of it. I, least of all, have been so minded."

"But you think of it, John?"

"Yes. Here, of late—often. I suppose, Harry, that men do not talk of this most eminent of life's affairs because—take care, what a wall of water!" We ran up the the beach, salt sprayed.

"Well, go on, John."

"No," I said, "another time."

"I am sorry."

The sea was talking enough for me. At last Heath said:

"I wanted to hear more. You know, John, that even between life-long friends there are personal boundaries which sensitive men hesitate to cross. They are guarded by good manners or by some delicately-felt convictions that there are subjects so sacred that silence is best—unless the other man invites speech."

A little wondering what he meant, I said, "What do you mean—not only about religion?"

"No, nor creeds. I mean that just this has happened. In all these years of hundreds of talks, this serious side of you I have never seen. So far, my dear John, you are new to me, surprisingly new. I realize that you are for me another you than you were. To know wholly a man you have loved is worth much, even through disasters, calamities, whatever justified the respect, held beforehand with earth's imperfect knowledge. Not often, John, does a man attain in this world these realizations in all their fullness. In some other world husband and wife, brothers, friends, may say, here at last is the soul we never knew."

"There will be some queer surprises, Harry," I smiled. "One might not recognize that other you. How appalling or how relieving to have the privilege of such recognition or not."

"Now don't be cynical," he returned. "I was serious."

"Were you, indeed. I was reflecting that I had as to this matter the better of you in advanced knowledge of a man I have known so long."

"Thanks, I could answer you, but, ah, here we are, and what a handsome young woman!" She had just come out of the cabin with Tom and a boy six or seven years old and was carrying a pail of lobsters. I spoke to her and stopped to pet the child and empty my pockets of pennies, shyly accepted. They went away along the beach.

We went in and sat down. "Who," I asked, "is that girl, Tom?"

"Oh, she 's Spruce Holloway's girl. He 's dead. That 's her child—the boy. If Spruce had a been alive, there'd of been a buckshot marriage."

"A buckshot marriage?" queried Heath. "Oh, I see."

"Yes, he 'd of made the man marry her. He went west, that man—the child's father, I mean."

"Pitiful indeed," said I.

"Down this way," said Tom, "we call them there girls broken wings."

"That is pathetic," said Heath. "Is it common?"

"Not nowadays. Used to be. Nice girl, too, but she 'll get a man to marry sometime. There 's one keepin' company now, I do hear. Fact is, she 's a real good cook. Can't get a girl married hereabouts unless she can cook."

"I should think you would need a cook yourself," said Heath.

"When a man can cook for himself what 's the use of two cooks. Everybody, specially the women, gives me that kind of advice. You ain't tried it, I hear. I have. The fact is, a man's life 's always a leaky boat. Come to put two in it, it leaks worse. The sea 's wife enough for me. Where 's that man Hapworth? Hear he 's goin' away. He 's a real loony, that man; can't even handle a dory of a calm day."

Heath said that was conclusive and, much amused, humored Dagett's abrupt changes of the subjects of talk, plying the old fisherman with questions. I heard only bits of their chat. My mind was on the woman and the little fellow who followed her along the shore or stopped to fling stones at the beach birds. The woman who had sinned was not considered here, at least by Dagett, as a lost soul, or as outside of the happy chances of womanhood; nor, indeed, had she any look of being hopelessly deprived of the joys of life. I was recalled from my thought of what would have been her fate in the city, by hearing Heath speak of her. Along this coast, at least, at that time, the social verdict was not mere contemptuous disapproval, nor did it involve a life sentence. This was plain from what Dagett had already said. Now, he added in reply to a question by Heath:

"She 's been a good mother to that boy. She 's took her wages of sin and complained none, and I take it she ain't really bad."

"But," I asked, "will the man she marries care for that other man's youngster?"

"He will, or he won't get her. I 'd take the boy any day. He 's strong and tough, and he just does love to go out in the boat with me—and fish, and get me to tell Bible stories. Jonah 's the one he likes best. I 've had Jonah swallered all sorts of ways."

"If," I said, "I can help this marriage, Dagett, let me know: I mean, if the man is really going to make her a good husband."

"He will, Sir, he will. You might think to give him work at that new mill."

"Well, we will see about it. I must talk to Cairns."

"I think, John," said Heath, "the woman's looks will assist him to be good."

"And her cooking to stay good," I cried, laughing. "The boy will be the trouble."

"Guess not, Sir," said Dagett, and then of a sudden he shifted the talk on to a biblical subject.

I rarely left him without having received some such contribution out of his lonely intimacy with the one book he owned. The abrupt turn to his favorite form of talk was as usual unexplained by what went before, or perhaps was suggested by my doubt in regard to the little fellow who, even more than his mother, had my pity.

"It is time we left, John," said Heath.

"Got to say something first, Mr. Sherwood; got

to get it off my mind, or you might n't never hear it again." Dagett had to the full the high self-estimate of the lonely thinker.

"What is it?" I asked.

"I 've been wantin to get your notions about it. It came to mind just as that small boy was gittin into my dory Monday come two weeks. It was just like as if he fetched it."

"Well, what is it?"

The air was damp and the evening chilly as we stood outside of the cabin door. I was impatient to get away. Dagett took his time, and spoke quietly.

"I was thinkin' that there ar'n't any little girls in the Old Testament. They could n't of been of much account in those days; and the little boys, I don't mind me of any, if it is n't for that small Samuel and Moses, and it might be one or two more. The little children don't seem to—I can't put it in the right words—but it 's just this, Mr. Sherwood—the little ones, the children, just all of them, did n't come to be considered till Christ He took 'em all under the wings of His love."

Heath's face expressed his pleasure at this interesting comment, as he said, "Thank you, Mr. Dagett, that is really a good thought and fresh—but, what 's the matter?"

The fisherman making no reply, turned back into the cabin and came out with what he called a spy-glass. He appeared to take no notice of the ques-

tions I put to him. He stood a moment in the fading light and the mists of the high-tossed surf, and searched the coast with his glass. Again I asked, "What is it?"

And he answered, "Why, Sir, there 's a sloop; it 's Tom Weston's, lyin' inside your reef. What doted fool ever fetched her over there and in weather like this?"

"By George! Harry," I cried, "it must be Mrs. Norman. Come, quick."

"What 's wrong?" said Dagett, amazed.

We fled with hardly a word. As we hastened over a mile of beach, there was no chance to do more than watch the surf, which now at full flood left but a narrow space between the wood and the sea. At the foot of my rocks, on the strand, we found Weston and a sailor. I learned that Mrs. Norman had, of course, traced Euphemia easily, and had bribed Weston to bring her to the camp. She had gone up to the tents half an hour before we arrived, and had asked the Captain to wait, and would I send him word what she wanted? He was in no hurry, the sea would go down with the ebb and make it easier. We left him and went up to the tents, both somewhat relieved for the time. There was no one in sight. I heard Euphemia's voice and another's in her tent. I ran to the kitchen. Dodo was not there, nor Mike. Returning, I found Euphemia outside of the tent, talking in low tones to Heath.

"What has happened?" I asked. Little things worried and disturbed my cousin, but not the great crises of life.

"I do not know yet. Mrs. Norman came in that sloop. I was asleep. I was wakened by a noise behind my tent and then a cry, a woman's. I ran out and saw men on the beach and Mrs. Norman running forward between the tents, reeling. I caught her and brought her into my own tent. She was sobbing, and not fit to talk. Something happened, I don't know what. I got her on to the bed and asked no questions. There was—I half heard it as I woke up—a great noise behind the tents, a scream. Then I ran out. I heard Dodo's voice, but he is not about the camp. He has gone."

"Was Norman here?" I asked anxiously.

"I do not know. I know no more than I have told you. Someone was there. Best to leave Mrs. Norman to me and send the sloop away. She must stay. Get them to bring up what baggage she has."

"Certainly," I said. I went to the beach and talked again to the men of the sloop, who knew only that Mrs. Norman had paid them well for a rather perilous voyage. The sloop sailed away and we went back to the tents. It was now dusk. Heath took down the lantern from Dodo's door and we soon saw among the pine needles behind the tents some evidence of a struggle.

As we looked about, Heath said, "Norman has certainly been here. Did he meet his wife?"

"He must have seen her. Dodo has gone after this madman," I said. "He will take care of himself. We shall see him presently and then we will know. There is nothing to do but to wait."

We went in silence to my day tent and sat down. Neither of us was disposed to talk. Heath, uneasy as I saw, went at last to Euphemia's tent to ask if she needed him.

"Neither doctor nor man," said my cousin; "I will call if I want you."

Heath returned and I said, "That must be a pretty resolute woman. She must have paid them pretty well to bring her."

"I said she would come, John."

I went away and foraged among Dodo's reserves for something to eat. Heath was gone when I came back, and was on the beach where he liked to get exercise.

I sat down alone wondering what had happened. This drama was playing itself out to me. It began with an idle, or I like to think, kindly curiosity about a tenant and involving several people, had become dark enough.

I became more and more uneasy as the night wore on to ten o'clock. Cousin Euphemia, large, spectral and white in the darkness, came to say Mrs. Norman was quiet, perhaps sleeping, and had hardly spoken, and where was Dodo?

I did not know, but was sure he would soon return. With a quite needless, very feminine and re-

peated request that we would make no noise, I was again left alone.

I had heard no sound of approach when Mike ran into my tent silently affectionate and behind him Dodo. His very neat clothes were torn and his face scratched and bloody. He stood, a dark figure in the tent opening, with the searchlight behind him. As usual, he waited for me to speak.

I said, "Come with me, Dodo. Talk low." I led him away from Euphemia's tent and my own to what had been Norman's. I lighted two candles and saw books, clothes, and an open bag in a confused litter.

"Sit down," I said.

"Yes, sir," Dodo dropped on to a camp stool.

"What happened?"

"I was mending the stovepipe in the kitchen, so I didn't hear anything. Then Mr. Hapworth came in from the wood and put twenty-five dollars on the table and he says, 'I am obliged by your kind service.' He spoke like he does always, very soft. I just thanked him and took it. After that he said he was going away and where was Dr. Heath? He didn't ask for you, but took my axe and said he must stake up the wood pile and end that job. I said it didn't make no matter. It was late. It was just after sundown. Then he went out and I heard him hewing the stakes.

"Next thing, sir, I heard him say, very loud, 'My God!' I ran out. He was standing still with the

axe in his hand, like he was dazed, just staring at a lady behind the tents. She was all in a black waterproof cloak and a hood. Hapworth he said quite slow, 'Dead, dead.' The lady she stumbled over the tent ropes to meet him. She cried out, 'I am not dead. I have come to help you, to find you.' She didn't have more than time to say it when that man ran at her with the axe. He screamed something like, 'I 'll make sure this time!'

"She ran back between the tents and I just caught him by the collar and put a foot behind him. He struck round at me with the axe and missed my shoulder as he fell, kind of sideways; grabbed me, too, and we sort of fell together. Can't tell just what did happen, but know I wrenched his arm back so he screamed; think I broke it. He fought and scratched me with one hand like a cat. At last I choked him so he lay still. It wasn't long, not half a minute. Then I let go and stood up. I thought I 'd killed him. He got up and stared round and pitched about like he was drunk and just walked away into the wood. There was light enough to see. He went faster and struck against the trees and that was all of him. I heard Miss 'Phemy and so I guessed the lady would be took care of and, seeing that you took an interest in this man, I thought you 'd like to know where he went."

"That was right. What next?"

"He was easy to track. He took up the creek a

bit and when I could n't keep sight of him, I went right to his house. The door was open and he had a light. He was piling books and clothes and chairs in a heap on the floor. Then, sir, he poured the oil of the lamp on it and set it afire and ran out the door round the house and up the road. I ran in and kicked some things into the fireplace and threw some out the door. Then I ran to the well and got a bucket of water. I left it safe. Was n't well lighted; was n't much oil, I guess. I went up the road a bit, but it was dark. I did think I heard him on the farther wood road a bit up Gay Mountain."

"That was well done," I said. "But we must find him to-morrow for the woman's sake. Was that all, Dodo?"

"No, sir. I stopped at Christian's. Mr. Cairns was there. I told them. Was n't that right? It seemed to trouble them a heap. Cairns went out to look for the man."

"You were entirely right. Go to my tent and get a glass of whiskey. You must need it."

"Thank you, sir, seems I kind of do need it."

"Go down to the beach and find Dr. Heath. He is walking there. Tell him the whole story." He was pleased, as I saw, to have another audience.

"After that get us something to eat, anything; you must be tired."

Euphemia had a good report to make of Mrs. Norman. When all was quiet, I asked my cousin to come

and have something to eat. She had, however, provided for herself in Dodo's absence and for Mrs. Norman, who wanted nothing.

I told her as briefly as possible of Mrs. Norman's narrow escape from death and of Norman's flight. I said too that Tom Dagett would be sent for early next day and left in charge of the camp, as we must try to find Norman. I had in mind a fear that he might return. "A search," I added, "must of course be made for a man as dangerous as Norman."

Upon this, lingering, she said, "John, I brought all this on you. I am very sorry I brought her here."

As she spoke, Heath stood in the tent opening, "Whether it was a wholly wise thing to do, Cousin," he said, "is really not worth considering now. It has proved to be fortunate for Mrs. Norman. If they had met elsewhere, something worse might have happened. You can't always be sure to have a good giant about like Dodo."

Cousin Euphemia was not yet consolable. I said that it was not a matter to trouble her, but she shook her head in negative protest and said what was so like her that Harry and I signalled quick glances of humorous enjoyment.

"The worst of it is, John, that I know I would do it again. I was sure that something awful was going to happen. I ought to have warned you."

I laughingly urged that the opportunity for further interference did not now exist and therefore she need not repent beforehand. On this she said that dis-

respect for these intimate spiritual premonitions was to be expected from two such heathen. Then we laughed until she, too, laughed, but said she knew she should not.

We were all clear that Mrs. Norman must be kept with us and guarded carefully until her husband's fate was determined, a very difficult question as it seemed to both the doctor and me. Mrs. Norman was quiet, my cousin assured us, and was behaving with such tranquil self-control as Euphemia considered unnatural, and would not talk and was not quite what was to be expected after such nearness to death. I inquired if Mrs. Norman had said or asked anything about her husband.

"Not a word," said Euphemia. She thought it strange, and so left us.

"What with Dodo and Euphemia and Mrs. Norman," said Harry "we are like d'Artagnan and his friends and will have to go sailing to talk where we will not be heard by someone."

"There is n't much to talk about," I said, "but here is your chance. Come with me to Norman's tent.

We lighted the pipes and held counsel with the help of that useful preliminary silence which the pipe imposes.

"This is a grim ending, Jack, to your attempt to run a private insane asylum. You have my admiration and my sympathy."

"Don't chaff me, Harry."

"Not I. I am very far from that. I am really wondering at the courage and intelligence of your charity. Now you are to play host to a sick woman. She will of course feel embarrassed here and will want to go home at once."

"Would you let her go?" I asked.

"No, I would not, of course not."

"Then she must stay. How long she must stay, we may know to-morrow after you have seen her and we hear or don't hear what has become of Norman. You seemed to think I was foolish to try to help Norman. You were really half in earnest."

"Was I? Then I did not make myself clear."

"No, and perhaps I am just now sensitive."

"Pardon me."

"All right," I said; "I am a little on edge to-night. We must be up early and find this madman."

"I often wonder, John, how far men like Norman are responsible. Is he no more so than the axe with which he strikes? Is he hopelessly hurled into murder by the riot of a group of nerve cells? Was he ever in a state to win by effort the battle against advancing insanity? I wonder, I often wonder that we are ever well in body or mind. Perhaps we never are."

"My dear Harry, if you begin at midnight a discussion on the insanities of the sane, I retire and accept any conclusion you may reach. You and I and Dodo and Mike will leave the camp in care of Dagett. We will pick up Christian and Cairns, who

is at Christian's, and search Mount Gay. I have little hope of securing our man. If he has kept on the main road, he may be easily traced. If he goes to Belport and then home by rail, he is enough known at Belport to be found. To westward of Mount Gay is a wilderness."

"What he will do, John, depends on his insane moods. The active mood of murderous fury is usually brief. He may then resume a condition of apparent competence for the everyday things of life. Suppose we find him, what then?"

"What after-course we shall take depends on the result of our search. I have become in a way responsible for this man and now for the woman. If we miss him and he has gone through Belport, I shall wire and write to someone in Baltimore."

"And Mrs. Norman, John?"

"She will stay, if I have to scuttle the catboat. Chance and the isolation of the place make me a rajah here like Brook of Sarawak. No woman at least can get away."

"Then good night. Cousin Euphemia is just now penitent, which is rare and not lasting. She will accuse, excuse and exalt herself for the not too happy results of her interference. She has always had more an imprudent pen than an imprudent tongue and that is obviously hard to explain for use of the pen gives time to reflect. It is always the tongue which is denounced in the Bible as the maker of mischief, never the pen."

"Yes, 'death and life are in the power of the tongue.'"

"I wish sleep was. I 've had but little lately," said the doctor yawning. "I wonder if Euphemia will stay awake. If she knows her powers orchestral and their infinite variety, she will remain awake in the interest of Mrs. Norman's quiet. She once told me that only vulgar persons snore in sleep. Really, John, Euphemia is a large contribution to the humorous side of life, an endless riddle to me. She is capable of any self-sacrifice, any minor folly, any major penitence on account of it. She has really moods of truth and moods when she is quite untrustworthy. By George, she can be unpleasantly truthful. But she can lie to Euphemia and never confess it even to the priest called conscience."

I laughed out my recognition of this estimate and was checked by Harry with, "Take care, John. You have acquired a fine talent for laughter. I was serious about Euphemia, thinking of the diabolical mischief a too busy angel may create by the use of her pen-feathers. I have no honest laugh in me tonight."

"You ought to know well enough," I said, "to give you a text in return—'even in laughter the heart is sorrowful and the end of mirth is heaviness.' But let us laugh if we can."

"Was it there Shelley found 'Our sincerest laughter with some pain is fraught'?"

"No, in his life. Let us go to bed. We have twice

said good night. I have tied Mike to the tent ropes. He will be guard enough to-night."

"Norman will not return, John. Rest assured of that. Good night."

XII

DODO called us at 6 A. M., and leaving Dagett in the camp with Mike and a word of caution, we went away through the dim forest. We picked up Christian, silent and apparently unconcerned, and Cairns, who was grave and had failed to find his friend. On our way we discussed our plan of search. We must first look for Norman on Mt. Gay. Heath and I took to the two old disused wood roads, Dodo went his own way with Mike, while Christian and Cairns separated, following trails through the dense underbrush up the farther side of the hill, agreeing to meet us on the granite summit, some eight hundred feet above the sea-level.

At the top I met all but Dodo. We had found no trace of the fugitive. After waiting a while we went down together, skirting the nearly dry bed of the Chasm Brook. The trail led us over fern-clad rocks, a rather sharp descent. About half way down Mount Gay the small stream falls some eighty feet into a dark-walled chasm. Here we were hailed by a cry from Dodo far below us. I heard, "He 's here. I found him," echoed by the walls of the canyon.

We hurried down and entering the gorge walked up it in haste. At the foot of the high rock wall

black with lichens stood Dodo. At his feet lay Norman, on his back, his clean-cut face white and still. Heath knelt. In a moment he looked up. "He is dead. I find no mark of injury, nothing, except a dislocated shoulder." He continued his inspection. "Ah, I see, the skull is fractured. It was a fall, a fall, John."

No one spoke except Cairns, who said, "Dead? Are you sure that he is dead?"

"Yes, and for many hours."

"Was it his shoulder that 's out of joint?" asked Dodo. "I thought maybe I broke his arm, and it was his shoulder." He was merely curious and no more.

"Was it suicide or accident?" I asked, as Heath rose.

"Let us go up above and look," said Heath, "but we may never know."

Leaving the dead man, we carefully followed upward the farther side of the lightly wooded edge of the chasm. Near the top Cairns pulled me back, saying, "Take care! Those pine needles are dangerous footing."

"Stop!" cried Heath. "Look, he slipped here. See, his heels dug into these dry pine needles."

"He fell? You think he fell?" I said. "It was not suicide."

"No, not that. He caught that maple sapling as he went over and held on. Then it broke, as you can see, when he swung out over the abyss."

"By heavens! in the darkness," murmured Cairns.

It was plain to be read. The grip of his one available hand slid down to where the sapling was thin; it broke and he fell. I asked all present to examine and feel sure that it was an accidental fall. We were of one mind.

Cairns turned to Dodo. "Didn't you say you broke his arm or put it out of joint?"

"I did," replied Dodo, grimly; "something cracked."

"If he had had the use of both hands," said Cairns, "he might have saved himself. My God! How awful!"

We were silent, convinced. Quite abruptly Dodo remarked, "Then I killed him when I did for that arm."

A moment I was troubled for Dodo. "An accident killed him," I said.

Was Dodo remorseful? I glanced at his dark face. His white teeth showed as he said, "I 'm not sorry. He clawed me awful. He was just a wild beast."

"Quit that," said Cairns sharply. "He was my friend."

"He wasn't mine," said Dodo. "He wasn't his wife's neither."

"Keep quiet," I said.

"Yes, sir." It was an outbreak of ferocity inherited from some far-away African barbarian. I understood it and my man. My own barbaric in-

stincts were merely some thousand years further away.

"Come," said Heath; "it is clear enough." We went down the mountain again to where in the shroud of thickening fog the body lay. I asked Dodo if he would stay by it until Christian and Cairns and some neighbors would return with the means of carrying it to Christian's house.

Dodo shook his head. "No, sir."

Cairns said, "I will stay." I laid a handkerchief over the pale face and between the black walls of the canyon we left the dead man and his friend.

"And so," said Heath, as we walked through the wood, "there ends a tragedy."

"It is not ill ended, if it be really ended."

"No, it may not be, but," returned Heath, "I think it is at an end."

"And the woman?" I said.

"God knows. She is well out of it."

"Someone must tell her. Will you, Harry, who knew her?"

"No, not I. After what that poor fellow said to you of me, I—you can understand. I would rather not. It is a feeling, John, not a reason. Certainly it should not be Euphemia, who can only tell her that it was an accident."

"Will she want to know the whole story?"

"I think so. It will be well for her to be made sure it was not suicide."

Then I knew it must fall to me as her host. I

did not like it, but I have always disliked a reprieve from the inevitable of some disagreeable task and when therefore I was at the camp, it now being near to noon, I called Euphemia out of her tent.

"Well, John," she said, as we walked to my own tent, "have you found him?"

"Yes. We found him dead, from a fatal fall in the night, an accident, certainly not suicide."

This tragic ending had an unexpected influence on my cousin. She sobbed, "If I had not brought Mrs. Norman here, this would not have happened."

"Listen," I said; "the man was hopelessly insane. He was homicidal and wanted to kill Heath." I told her briefly of the night peril, thinking to relieve her mind. The result was as usual to make her minutely curious but presently, getting no complete satisfaction as to the cause of Norman's desire to kill the doctor, of which I said nothing, she returned in a quite childlike way to her own share in the matter.

"I shall never, never forgive myself."

"You will forget it to-morrow, or begin to blame me or someone else."

"I shall. I shall. I am foolish, I suppose, but it might have been helped if you had only—"

"Only what?" I broke in, quite out of patience. "That poor fellow is mercifully disposed of. He is happier dead and his wife the better for it. Now I must tell her."

"Why not Harry? It seems to me that a physician would be the better person."

"No, I am her host. He will not and I must unless you will."

She at once declared she would not, that if Harry would not do his manifest duty, I was the proper person. If she had not brought Mrs. Norman to camp, it might not have happened. She would have to confess it.

"But she knows that already. What is there to confess? Euphemia, you are really inconceivably foolish."

"I am. I am," she cried, mopping her eyes. "I will tell her you want to see her. It is all dreadful. I wish I had never come."

I followed her. "She wants to see you," she said as she came out of the tent. I went in and Euphemia walked away, tearful, unfolding a fresh handkerchief.

The gray foggy day made the tent so dark that I was aware at first only of a pale face as she lay on the lounge and of large eyes and a hand meeting mine. There is one thing in a woman which is always agreeable to me, a low clear voice, with varied tones. Before I collected myself so as to speak, she said, "Mr. Sherwood, I have had a life of great sorrow. If you have bad news, do not try to prepare me for it. Have you found him?"

"Yes, he died by a purely accidental fall into a chasm on the mountain."

"It was not suicide?"

"No, it certainly was not that."

"Did he suffer?"

"No, his death must have been instantaneous."

She said nothing for a little while and then murmured, "God has been good to him."

"And," thought I, "to you."

For a moment she was again silent and then said, "Thank you for your great kindness to him, and above all for your frankness. I owe you a longer statement of what led up to this. I am not in a state to talk just now. Thank you."

She put out a hand which was tremulous. It was the only sign of emotion, for her voice was clear and distinct and never broke. I left her, as she said, "Ask Miss Swanwick to leave me alone for an hour and—she will pardon me—not to think that even the kindest talk can help me."

I knew that I had met an unusual character and that her amazing self-command must be due to circumstances in her life of which as yet we knew but little. For several days we saw nothing of Mrs. Norman and quietly arranged for her husband's burial, concerning which she had no directions to give and no wishes except that I would arrange it as seemed best to me.

Just above the road to Belport on the northern lower slope of Mt. Gay is one of those lonely little graveyards seen in this half-settled land. As the men climbed the hill with their load I observed the

too common neglect, the rude broken fence, the two or three marble headstones leaning over, futile records of sorrow as dead as those the stones were meant to keep in remembrance. More pathetic were the mounds marked only with rain-faded little muslin flags renewed year by year over the dead in battle long ago. Here we left him.

As the party separated, Heath and I walked homeward through the forest. I was first to break the silence.

"That was a sad ending, Harry. There was a man of intelligence, cultivated, unusually well-read, kindly, charitable, religious, a master of all the courtesies of life, distinctly what you and I claim to be, a gentleman." I paused.

"Indeed, I share with you, John, the wonder you have in mind over the contrast of this man's natural character with his actions, his murderous impulses. Like others I have seen, he must have been the merest child in his unreasoning acceptance of those counselling voices urging murder, and after all, we must believe him as truly innocent as a baby, ah, as you or I—"

I found it hard to accept his verdict of utter inability of control and said that when I threatened Norman he became scared.

"Yes, that is true," said Heath. "I have known cases where some brutal handling on the part of a man the madman meant to kill, alarmed him into a state of quite lasting harmlessness."

"That seems strange," I said.

"But true."

I said no more, but went on thinking of the horror of a brain haunted by fiend thoughts, forever whispering murder to one incapable of intelligent control.

The camp life lapsed into its usual routine, Mrs. Norman spending much time lying on cushions upon the cliff, where Mrs. Christian and Euphemia sat and sewed, mercifully silent, while day after day went by. I had an unwilling guest, as I knew, but too plainly she was not in condition to leave or endure long travel. Thus week after week of summer came and went, while slowly her color returned with increase of strength.

Euphemia, at her best, assured her that I would be hurt if she left us until Heath thought her well enough. Now and then she said to me a few words of thanks or greeting, as she went to and from her meals in a separate tent I set up to secure for her the isolation I was sure she desired. More rarely in the intimate life of the camp we had a few minutes of longer chat, but generally I so arranged as to leave her alone with Euphemia.

As I had to visit the mill and see my newly-bought pine land, we contrived easily to be much absent from the camp. Distant sailing excursions up to the Grand Manan and Digby Sound, the home of Evangeline, twice took us away for days at a time and thus in one and another way the women were left to them-

selves. I had in fact seen very little of Mrs. Norman. Euphemia had wisely decreed that they should dine alone and, under all the circumstances, this seemed reasonably to save the younger woman from needless social effort.

The woods were now too early gay with the colors of autumnal days. September had come and at last all of my guests declared that they could stay no longer.

Some days before they left camp, Mrs. Norman asked me timidly if she might walk with me in the wood, as now she felt equal to some exercise and evidently felt the need of it.

I knew that what she desired was freedom to speak where she would not be overheard. It was now more than four weeks since Norman's death. She had not so grieved with conventional sufficiency as to satisfy Euphemia, who was on the way toward doubtfully adopting her as a proper case for spiritual treatment. She had proved, however, as I suspected, not quite all that the role of young widow suggested to Euphemia. My cousin said to Heath that she had been in no haste at all about mourning dress and was shocked that its absence did not trouble our guest. On this Harry brutally remarked that the common sense of time would dictate entire satisfaction with this merciful divorce by death. Euphemia, indignant, returned that the doctor's life had made him hard and that he was a sad example of the want of sympathy so common in a godless profession.

Said Harry, who liked to puzzle her, "Where did you get that commonplace wisdom? I must tell John. The fact is, Cousin, you yourself are a materialized spiritualist; that for you!" and fled laughing, delighted as usual to leave her bewildered.

With some advice from Euphemia concerning the length of walk Mrs. Norman and I went slowly up the brook where by the side of this comrade stream of many moods, I had had a path cleared so that beyond the open pine forest the underbrush was cut away as far as a trail was required.

"This way," I said, and went on before her—of which matter whether side by side or in Indian file there is much to be said. A quarter of a mile away the path crossed a small morass where stepping stones had been laid by Dodo, and we came among the deciduous trees. Here the way was broader and I could walk at her side.

Was her returning health, which was obvious, due to the tonic of release from the prison of a terror too great for human endurance, or to the royal health touch of the winds of these coasts? Something was fashioning out of the troubled, broken-spirited woman an intelligent creature who was to have many forms of attractiveness from childlike sweetness and capacity to be easily pleased to bewitchment which no man can explain or has explained since the world began.

"The pine woods make no record of the decay of fall," I said, willing to distract her. "There is no

autumn here. The pine is an aristocrat and has the peculiar ways of his caste."

"Tell me," she said. "I hardly understand."

"His only autumn comes in the spring."

"I see. The spring is their autumn. Then they only shed their leaves when the summer is coming, not in the woodland sadness of the fall."

"Yes, that is so."

I had the suggested thought as she spoke that for her the full sense of loss might not come until she was far away in time from the oppression of a fatal hour of wintry fate.

She was silent for a while and then said, "Ah, the pleasant, companionable water. You must find it a pleasure to own it."

"It seems rather to own me. I am in fact a divided property. I came to this coast a very sick man. Sea and wood have been kind. They have made me well and given me many gifts besides health. I have been a hard-worked iron-master, liking my task and little else. Here I have discovered a new world of happiness. As I look back, it seems to me incredible. It is like the return of a larger childhood."

"How incredible?—but no, not quite."

"No, not quite incredible. I was a rather lonely, very imaginative child. After that I lived long a mere material life. Can you conceive of a man finding himself, Mrs. Norman, his long-lost self?"

"Yes, Mr. Sherwood, and of a woman who has

lived too much in the world of emotion without the regulation of a happy material life of duties never finding herself."

This half confession pleased me. "But she will find herself, her true self." I understood her and to get off the ground of personal reflections I added, "Perhaps it is because my brook has no duties that I have come to like it. It quenches no thirst of cattle. It turns no mill. It is uselessly delightful. It shall never work."

"Never, I hope. How gay it is. It seems to romp and dance like a child."

"In July it is bordered with marsh marigolds and —stop a moment!" I had the sudden sense of something pleasant. Then in an instant I knew it was because of the fragrance of the twin flower. A faint emotion of pleasure reminded me anew of what this scent once brought to me before the recognition of it as an odor had become clear. I stood in brief thought of this as singular while I looked about me for the flower.

"What is it?" she asked. "Linnea? I do not know it."

"The twin flower. It is long out of season, but here it is, just half a dozen."

She leaned over to look at it. "It is new to me. How delicate! How refined!" I observed that she did not pick it. "What a tiny thing to give such pleasure! I wonder if it is like music and poetry

and is a giver of unequal pleasure, more to me or to you than to Dodo?"

"Very likely, seeing that there are coarse tastes in regard to odors as in other things. The taste in odors is rather suggestive. I am at once prejudiced against a woman who uses certain perfumes."

Then she said gaily, "I shall claim at least a small share of approval, for I dislike all scents except flowers and not all of them."

"My cousin Euphemia will agree with you. Are you tired?"

"Oh, no, no."

"Then I must show you the famous spring. Most of my brook comes from it, but at a word we will return!"

"No, I must first talk to you, but not while we walk. I must sit down."

"Very well then. We will see the spring."

We passed under and through the autumn glory of red oak and maple with knee-high on each side the varied reds of the blueberry bushes. We went on, not talking, until I led her around the rocks to the moss-bordered pool.

As always, the quick outleap of this great bounty of water between the stern granite lips was a refreshing joy.

"Sit here," I said, and waited to hear what this young woman with her strange experiences and quick insight would say.

She knelt beside the spring and then looked up at me as if I were to speak and interpret its language.

I said lightly, "Old Mother Earth does not often speak to us like this. What does it say?"

"Ah, if I only knew!" and then with a pause, "but isn't there a kind of joy in not knowing?"

"Perhaps," I returned. I thought at once of the mystical vague thinkings of Norman and a gleam of explanatory comprehension flashed through my mind —but no, this was more wholesome reflection.

"How cold it is," she said. "The mere sight of it makes one thirsty. How it sparkles!"

The tin cup Norman brought hither was on the rock above her head. I did not offer it to her. Why I did not, I would have found it hard to explain. Meanwhile, still kneeling and making a cup of her hands, she drank as I watched her.

"Must I thank the spring or you?" she said, looking up. "All waters do differ so much. You seemed in doubt when I said there was joy in not knowing, but I do insist, Mr. Sherwood, that ignorance may be many forms of bliss. There is a charm in not knowing what this new-born child of earth could tell if we could interpret its prattle. Isn't the impossibility of knowing all of friendship or of love and of God, a part of life's value? Mystery is for some people the far too cherished part of religion."

"Yes, yes," I said laughing, "Euphemia."

"Oh, yes, indeed, the dear lady loves it. But am I not right?"

She rose from her knees as I replied:

"Yes, you are right for you. I suppose that it is for some natures agreeable; not for me. The less of mystery, the less of the unknowable, the better I am pleased. I cannot make clear what I mean without too long a talk, but I confess that to have Nature willing to explain herself too easily would not please me."

"I see," she said thoughtfully. "It is a large subject."

Wondering how much of this interesting little woman I was yet to know, I said gaily, "I shall tell you if ever I come to understand what the baby spring says before it gets to the sea."

"Oh, yes. It will be growing up. Do not forget."

"No, but now to make you more comfortable. Sit here." As I spoke I folded a light shawl I had brought and set it behind her.

"Thank you. I am not at all tired. And now let me talk. I wanted—I had to have a chance. I think it right to make clear to you some things. I have been here, Mr. Sherwood, the prisoner of my own weakness, for I really came in spite of every counsel and I am the wreck of all kinds of moral and bodily storms. I got up out of bed to come here."

Hesitating a moment, she went on. "Now what I am, I must explain a little. I may have seemed too cold, too—well, I feel sure Miss Swanwick thinks me so. When my father was long ill in Italy, Mr. Nor-

man was kind beyond the common and I came to care for him. You would understand why, if you had known him in his better days. We were married before my father's death and, returning to Baltimore, within a month this dreadful thing came on, oh, even before we came back. I did not understand at first. Then I knew. I lived a year amid wild jealousies and threats of my life, oh, more than threats! I thank God that I was able to endure it to the end." Sitting with head bent down, she ceased to speak.

Thinking to relieve her of a trying task, I said, "I know the rest, Mrs. Norman, all of it, or enough."

She looked up. "Oh, thank you. That spares me something. One word more, I want to give your man, Dodo, five hundred dollars. He saved my life and indeed I still want to live. Here is my cheque."

I took the cheque and said, "I will give it to him."

"Thank you and you will not misunderstand me. I tried to tell Miss Swanwick. She did nothing but cry, dear lady, and urged me to find comfort in her own church. I wanted—oh, I did want to explain myself fully. I could, but not to her. Her kindness defeats me always and I too, end by crying." She turned with a quick movement. "Let us go."

We walked homeward for a time in entire silence. My mind kept oscillating, so to speak, between the present and the remembrance of a past hour with Norman at the spring when he stood confessing the murder of this woman who here had told me her un-

happy story. She had been more precise, and naturally so, when she had tried to tell my cousin, but somewhat failed, as I have said. It was plain, however, that she had lived for months with the fear of being killed by the man to whom she had, as Euphemia thought, given herself under the influence of gratitude so great as to have made her consent too readily to her father's wish. Now she was deeply in debt to strangers. To them she must make clear that she had done her duty. To them she could not say that the torture of daily fear and the years of suspense as to Norman's fate, and her own relation to life, had left her with what affection she had ever had neutralized by the cruelty of events. Such at least was my own inference after talking it over with Euphemia and later with Heath. Her anxiety to go home was naturally due to a desire to trespass no longer on my hospitality and to settle the complications of Norman's affairs.

Aware as we walked beside the stream that she was too plainly living over in memory a painful past, I said, "You know this pleasant aromatic odor?" I picked the leaves as we moved on and gave them to her.

"Oh, yes, the sweet fern, and this too, the wintergreen." She responded at once to the gentle call of normal things and noticed the ripening beauty of the leaves of the maple and the bright colored toadstools. Encouraged by a word or two and more and more interested she observed the many varieties of golden-

rod and asked what the bees in swarms were gathering from the spruces. I did not know, nor do I now. Presently she said, pausing near the camp, "What a curious stone! It is wet and yet all these granite boulders are dry."

"Yes. I must have passed it many times until Heath noticed it. It is a very black dense rock, not belonging here. It must have been carried hither by the great glacier sledges ages ago. The people here call these stones weeping rocks. Even in dry weather they are wet."

"I have heard of them. How do you explain their being wet?"

"I do not know. Ask the doctor. There are some superstitions about them; Dodo has one."

"Oh, but I must know." She had again the eager childlike way which was so pretty. For my part I was pleased to have found for her in nature an hour of relief from the company of sorrowful memories.

"Ask Dodo," I said. "Here we are at home."

"It has been indeed a kind home to me," she returned, as we passed through the tent lines. "Thank you."

The September gales from the northwest are the only certainly predicable weather on the coast. One of them quite forbade for a time the intended departure of Euphemia and my other guests. I soon found that to get to Belport by the wood trail and then by a long drive was, for Euphemia at least, not to be thought of. The doubt with which she con-

fided her trunks to a railway and out of her sight was, as Heath said, of mysterious origin. I had settled that Dodo should take the trunks by catboat and that some kind of a carriage would meet the women at Christian's. But Euphemia at once declined this separation from her baggage and had not walked two miles at any one time for years.

We could but wait on the uncertain September weather. Three days of southwest wind and rain tried Heath's patience, as he would have to wait for Euphemia and was evidently eager to leave and annoyed by her difficulties. A day was twice set for the sail to Belport and twice the wind or a fury of rain forbade. I took it philosophically, as one may the lesser calamities of others, but in fact the camp was becoming a bit out of temper.

Meanwhile, Mrs. Norman must have felt a certain embarrassment at being the prisoner of my hospitality because of Euphemia's whims. More than a month had gone by since Norman's death. Her own bodily weakness had at first forbidden her departure and now it was my cousin's fancies.

After these last few days of postponement, Mrs. Norman told Euphemia that on Monday or Tuesday she would go to Belport in my boat, unless I said it would be dangerous. I declared that the weather would probably serve or that if she decided to go, I would go to Belport with her, and Euphemia might wait on the winds with Heath.

Mrs. Norman had shown me no least sign of the

impatience which in Heath, to my surprise, and in Euphemia, not to my surprise, was at times rather too plain. As usual, Euphemia gave way before a decisive person, but said to go in my sailboat, if it blew hard, was tempting Providence. Then for the first time I heard from Mrs. Norman a word of the humorous criticism which, in some characters, no calamity seems to keep in the silence of unsaid things.

Faintly smiling, she said, "Dear Miss Euphemia, tempting Providence? Why do people think that Providence is so easily tempted?"

We were standing near my tent at this time discussing the weather and plans for speeding the parting guests. Euphemia, who was always puzzled by this kind of mingling of the mirthful and good sense, considered Mrs. Norman's remark silently, while Heath said, "Mrs. Norman, there is somewhere in the Koran—or, no, in some Oriental writer, 'Tempt not God, nor yet the devil.' "

"That certainly covers the whole ground," I said, laughing as the group separated. They did get away on Tuesday, in perfect weather.

I neglected to state the unlooked-for result of Mrs. Norman's gift to Dodo. On returning from our walk I sought him in the kitchen, and said, "Mrs. Norman feels very grateful to you for saving her life and has asked me to give you this check for five hundred dollars."

"I won't take it, sir." He spoke with unusual decision. "I killed that man. He 'd have been alive

now if I had n't have lamed his arm. He was my enemy. I killed him. I 'm not sorry. He mauled me awful. If she was to know I killed him, she would n't want to thank me."

I reasoned with him in vain. "No, sir, I just can't take it."

When I returned the check to Mrs. Norman, of course, without Dodo's full explanation of his refusal, she said, "I will then have merely to thank Dodo," which she did in a kind note. I read it to him. He made no comment, except to say he would like to keep the note. When I told Heath he remarked that my horizons of human experiences must be enlarging. They were in many directions. I said to Euphemia only that Dodo had refused the gift, on which she returned that it showed great delicacy of feeling, and Mrs. Christian, to whom with praise of Dodo Euphemia mentioned it, that he was a fool and that there were some people no one could understand.

XIII

THE business of packing became, as usual, very serious for my cousin. On the day before that set for them to leave, between unpacking and repacking, and anxious consideration of the weather, she was so fully occupied that Mrs. Norman was for the time left to Heath and to me. My cousin, who had just received a number of letters, excused himself to my great satisfaction, when I asked him to join Mrs. Norman and me in a visit to Dagett.

"It is over a mile," I said; "will it tire you? It is hard walking."

"No, I am ever so much better. I shall be ready in a minute."

Presently Mrs. Norman rejoined me, and together we went down the rocky descent and walked up the beach. On our left was the sombre green of pine and spruce, with the red and gold of autumn, and here and there the singular purples of the striped maple.

"An early fall, is it not?" asked my companion.

I said as it was my first autumn in these woods, I could not tell.

"But the sea—the sea! You must have known it?"

"No, sea and forest are like new books to me—books in a strange tongue—I have had to learn their language."

"But you have learned it?"

"Yes, more or less, and slowly."

For a little while neither spoke, which is the sign of an empty mind or a too full mind. Then Mrs. Norman said, "I sometimes think that it is the citizen of towns who gets the most out of nature. It is so with you, I am sure. All this wonder world speaks one tongue to you and another to Mr. Cairns."

"Yes," I said, "perhaps—but these coast people do not easily reveal themselves. They are apt to surprise you at times."

"That may be. The mention of Mr. Cairns," she said, "recalls to me the fact that I ought to have spoken to him of his rescue—of my—of Mr. Norman. I did not forget, but—I could not. Before we talk of other matters, I want to ask you when I am gone to give the money I meant for Dodo to Mr. Cairns and Susan as a remembrance of what he did for Mr. Norman. It is a wedding gift. Here is my cheque."

"It will be welcome, I am sure."

"I have, of course, thought much of what he did. How very strange, Mr. Sherwood, are the chances of this life. The doing of a brave action has brought back into this man's life friends, love and respect. What a lift out of the slough of self-reproach and

dishonor. Mrs. Christian has told me all about him. He seems to me an unusual man. Where did he get his refinement, his good manners?''

''Well, he comes of one of those cultivated clerical New England breeds which have given us so many able men, but he owed much to Mr. Norman.''

''Yes, so I have heard, and that does make nobler the risk he took. He was far from any hope of rehabilitation. It was the impulse of gratitude that made him do what we call a heroic act.''

''Yes,'' I said, ''but like most of these rescues, there was no time for complex thought. This action had the abruptness of an urgent instinct. You see this where children who can not swim have lost their lives in trying to rescue comrades, or in the most perilous of all attempts to save life, the most fatal, the attempt to stop a running horse.''

''You like to talk about courage, Mr. Sherwood.''

''Yes. I often regret that I had no chance in war to test what no man surely knows he has without some trial and indeed, Mrs. Norman, men may go, most men do, nowadays, a lifetime in this igorance. My conscience is at ease as concerns our Civil War. I was doing a better service than if I had been under fire.''

''I see. Yes, I understand. Dr. Heath is given to some friendly idolatry about you.''

''Oh, I suppose so. Don't trust Harry Heath too much.''

"Or Miss Euphemia or—"

"No, none of them," I laughed.

"Not even my own experience?"

"No, no."

"Well, I have let you off very easily, but it is chiefly because I can not venture to talk freely. My thanks for kindness are out of my power to express and always will be. I suppose you will at least permit praise of the sea. It seems to be in a good humor to-day. How can it be at times so terrible! And yet I should like to see one of your great storms."

"Harry Heath says, apropos of this, he would like to have seen once the unrestrained anger of certain great men. He named one or two. Euphemia must bring you again," I said thoughtlessly. "I will order a storm for you."

"Oh, never, never, Mr. Sherwood."

"Pardon me."

"That is needless. You said what was kind and natural. I may come to see things differently. To associate all this endless beauty of sea and wood with our poor human disasters so as to lose its true value is, I suppose, unreasonable."

"Ah, Mrs. Norman, it is not as I think of it a thing we can settle in the Supreme Court of reason."

"You are right, quite right. I carry away some pleasant memories, some things I want never to forget, never, unending kindness, thoughtful considera-

tion and—please not to protest, Mr. Sherwood—yes, I know you are one of the men who are embarrassed and annoyed by thanks."

It was true. I did not know how she knew it. For a moment she seemed to me to be too much moved for further speech. I was not displeased that she recognized what had been done for her. I did not want to be told of it. I have always had this peculiarity.

"I had at least to speak out of what is the smallest part of it all, hospitality so unusual. Now I have paid this debt to myself, I shall say no more, except," and she smiled, "that as you do not like the debts of gratitude to be paid in words, you must have suffered, if all I hear of you be true."

"For shame, Mrs. Norman."

"Well, you deserved it. I will not sin again. What kind of a man is this Dagett, who seems to amuse Dr. Heath so much?"

"He is an example of remarkable intelligence without cultivation and without enterprise, an oddly original thinker. You will see for yourself if you humor him into frank talk."

"That seems attractive. You have been, I hear, a kind friend to these people in their lonely, limited lives."

"What, again? Ah, Mrs. Christian has been discoursing—"

"Yes, an angel was the smallest title she had for you."

"There are people who knew me at home who would be rather amazed at my moral promotion."

"Are you?"

"Yes and no."

"Why, yes?"

"Because, to be frank, I did not imagine it possible that a man's view of his relation to others could be changed by the happiness of recovered health and by what was new to him, the close and every-day contact with nature."

"I think I understand, but you said yes and no. Why, no?"

"No, because I have seen here how easily men are changed; one, Cairns, by a single event and by a little sunshine of prosperity."

"Oh, Mr. Cairns. I wonder if many people, strong people, unhappy people, can come to know the happiness of some such radical change or—or if we—I can't talk of it now as I should like to do. Is that your fisherman on the rock?"

"Yes." I was glad to get away from what I dislike, talk of this kind and, above all, of myself. I was saying things to this woman such as were foreign to my nature to speak of to anyone. We fell as by common consent to trivialities with chat of the seaside people and were presently at Dagett's cabin.

"Good morning, Tom," I said. "This is Mrs. Norman."

He put on a queer, puzzled look. "I was thinkin'

you was Mrs. Hapworth.'' Being at the moment behind her, I shook my head at him.

The woman said quickly, ''My husband was not of sound mind. Here he chose to call himself Hapworth. His name was Norman.''

''Well, now,'' said Tom, ''come to think of it, he did seem a bit queer. Hope I don't offend, ma'am.''

''Oh, no,'' she returned very quietly; ''it was quite natural that I should puzzle you.''

''Would you come in?'' We followed him.

She looked about her at oars, sails, nets and oilers on the beams overhead. ''I should think you needed a woman, Mr. Dagett,'' she remarked smiling.

''Now that 's what every woman says. It is a kind of a here-and-there sort of place, but I can always find things. Women like closets. Ever notice that, Mr. Sherwood?''

''I had not noticed it.''

''I have,'' laughed Mrs. Norman, ''the more closets the better.''

''Well, it 's so. I 've got three old aunts. They set it up one of them was to live with me. They drawed lots for me, but I said that was worse than gettin' married, because there was n't any law for divorcing your aunt, and there was n't a chance of them dyin' because my folks has got a most teedyus talent for livin'!''

Mrs. Norman laughed outright. ''I give up,'' she said. ''But you will get caught some day and then there will be closets—''

He shook his head. "Not this fish, ma'am. Been hooked once. No more for me."

Desirous of being pleasant she presently asked, "And still are you not lonely at times? I suppose you have time to read? Would you like me to send you some books?"

"Well, Sabbath do drag a bit but I don't feel to need books. The Bible 's enough for me. Other days I 'm busy one way and another."

"Of course," pursued Mrs. Norman, much amused, "there is church on Sunday, but it is a long way to Belport."

"That 'minds me of Deacon Jones. He comes here now and again to get me to go to Belport to meetin'. I said, 'Bible 's enough meetin' for me. Got some choice of preachers in that meetin'.' Then he talked about two or three bein' necessary and I, I just said did he think God was n't around when a man prays by himself and besides, the way he put it was n't what was set down. I never could clear my head about that text. Texts is very contradictious sometimes. Ever notice that, ma'am? Now there 's them texts concernin' temptation. They 're right puzzlin'. There 's that about God not temptin' no man and about prayin' to be kept out of temptation. I 'm of a mind that that 's where the devil comes in. He does explain a lot of things."

"Why not ask Miss Swanwick, Mr. Dagett," said my companion.

"Never thought of that. I did hear Mrs. Chris-

tian say she 's awful learned in Bible. Guess she 's a right deep thinker."

Euphemia as a deep thinker was almost too much for my gravity. Mrs. Norman took it seriously, or seemed to, and advised the conversation with my cousin, expressing some desire to be present and clearly enjoying my fisherman.

While Tom was indulging himself with free use of a rare opportunity to talk, I observed the perfect courtesy of Mrs. Norman's attentiveness, the absence of feature comment upon his oddity of statement and the courteous little word of interest or agreement. It is not always easy for the humorous to conceal the sense of amusement, or was she merely so very gravely interested as not to feel for a time the humor of what he said?

"Ah, Mr. Dagett," she remarked, "people generally manage to get out of the Bible support for whatever they desire to believe." She was evidently luring him on to not unwilling talk, liking, I thought, as I did, his earnestness and its somewhat startling originality.

"That 's so, ma'am," he went on well pleased. "It 's like the sea, the Bible. It 's God's own sea. There 's many fishes in it and people they just keeps so much of their catch as they want and then they cooks it their own way and that 's the end of it."

Turning to me, she said, "That is sadly true, Mr. Sherwood. We should have had Miss Euphemia here." Tom, self-absorbed, was for a moment silent,

while I agreed with Mrs. Norman. Then he said, "And there 's things in the sea no man ain't never seen, nor never will. It 's awful deep, the Bible sea."

"Thank you," said Mrs. Norman as we rose. "I have got some new ideas. Thank you."

"That 's the good of talkin'," said Tom, much delighted. "Come again."

"No. I go to-morrow."

"Oh, you 'll come again," returned Tom confidently.

As we walked away, Mrs. Norman said, "Tom is truly a delight, and to think of the vastness of the Bible being like a great ocean."

"It was," I remarked, "a quite natural thought for Tom."

"But to think of it also as a huge grab bag and yet not in the least to feel the humor of it!" I was aware that she felt with me the strangeness of this lonely man's reflections so reverent and yet so remote from the ridiculous in their earnestness.

As we walked, some care had to be given to the footsteps where rocks were slippery or where was need to pick the way over rough stones, so that, as we moved on, I was reminded of Norman's complaint. Thus there was but little chance to talk, until the beach became easier.

Then I said, "I feared for you Tom's clumsy frankness. He lives on the surface, so to speak. It is hardly to be called frank, it is so simple."

"Ah, Mr. Sherwood, the unnaturalness, the reserve of our own social world is sometimes far more clumsy. I mean about death. Plain outspokenness like this man's would never hurt or even trouble me. I am far past the suffering which mere words can bring."

"You are quite right," I said, "and the man who uses the words is to be considered. Tom was, I hope, all I promised?"

"Oh, more, far more. I have enjoyed the walk and indeed I should like to hear Miss Euphemia and Tom."

"You never will, but here is the camp and tea on the rock."

"Ah, I am not sorry to go away, Mr. Sherwood, but I shall miss these out-of-door people and the open-air life and the new friends I am leaving. I can not quite trust myself to say to you or even to Dr. Heath what I would and never can say. I can talk to Miss Euphemia but the dear lady weeps over me and as I can not always cry, she brings me into a condition of self-reproach because I am not to her what she seems to think I should be. I have written you a note. I want a small added service."

"Anything I can do?"

"Yes, yes."

"Tea, tea, my dear," called Euphemia. We had lingered on the top of the rise from the beach and now joined them. Mrs. Norman of late made evident efforts to take a share in the easy chat at the meals she now partook with us. She drank her tea, set down

her cup and remained quiet as the evening dusked over a tranquil sea. At last she rose, saying she had letters to write, and left us.

"A very remarkable woman, that," said Heath, "so quiet, so self-contained."

"Sometimes too much so," said Euphemia.

"No," said Heath. "You ask too much of human nature. She must have lost any real affection in the face of a life with a madman, and that was two years ago."

"She may never have had affection," persisted Euphemia, "never truly, or how could she be without any appearance of emotion and be so easily diverted? It is too unhuman."

"It would have killed most women, Euphemia," I said. "I can understand how one may have gone through such a campaign of torture, such a trial of courage, as leaves one a veteran no longer capable of the distress which finds comfort or relief in vain tears."

"You are quite right," remarked Harry. "She is natural, Euphemia, and that surprises you."

"I do not agree with you or him. It is unnatural. I should like to know what you really think, John."

"You have heard what I think. It is plain enough." I was growing impatient and disliked the discussion perhaps because Mrs. Norman was my guest, perhaps because her reticence and self-control were to my liking. Euphemia was apt to construct for people she fancied a theoretical scheme of con-

duct and when they did not live up to it began to lose her too easily won sympathies.

Now she said, "Of course you don't really think. What man would? I shall be anxious as to what she will be or become. She is, or will be, a very handsome woman and she is young."

"For heaven's sake, Euphemia," I said, "let the poor thing alone." I fear I was rather cross.

Euphemia rose, put up her glasses and said, "I like her, John. She could make anyone like her, but I can not help wishing that she were more serious-minded. She was laughing with Dodo yesterday about some queer stone he calls a sweating rock, laughing like a child. I was really troubled. What was it about the rock that amused her?"

"Euphemial, this," murmured Heath.

"Well, Cousin," I said, "I at least am glad she can laugh and be natural. Dodo says that in the South the negro explains the origin of these sweating stones: 'When Adam he done his first day's work, he just sweated awful and when he sat down on a rock that just sweated, too. All that kind of stones kept on sweating ever since.' "

"I wonder," said Harry, "what inspired colored preacher invented that explanation."

"How absurd!" said Euphemia. "Good night, you have both been disagreeable. You are very—very—I will not say what I think. Good night." Heath signalled me with a smile as she sailed away,

for Euphemia reminded me now and then of a great ship under sail.

"The cousin is—well, not serene at times," said Heath. "Mrs. Norman has been through what would wear out the honest emotionality of any but the feeble. What I said was true."

"Yes, and just. I am sorry you are all leaving me."

"And I—but before I go let me say a pleasanter word. You will like it, John. I had a letter to-day from Baltimore. I am engaged to Miss Howard."

"What, to Lucy? Ah, that is indeed good news. Have you told Euphemia?"

"No."

"Then tell her. Let her think she is the first to hear it."

Heath laughed. "Good advice that, and a kindly ending to this strange month. I trust you will now have an easier time—and how well you are. When shall you return home?"

"I shall stay here until the snows come. After that, I do not know, but my city life is over."

"That will be well. And now I must go and dress."

Our last camp dinner was not altogether a success, although Dodo put forth not only his best culinary skill, but had decorated the tent walls with the moose wood foliage. In the summer its large leaves seem to float in air on tendrils so delicate as to be almost invisible at a little distance in the dark wood shadows.

Now the leaves of dark purple were spotted with scarlet.

I had brought in some of the leaves one day and as Mrs. Norman expressed pleasure and they were new to her, our decoration was a little tribute to my guest. As Mrs. Norman did not appear at dinner and, as Dodo reported, ate very little, he was doubly disappointed. Failure of appetite was for Dodo a serious condition. We took care to praise both the dinner and this display of autumnal color.

Heath exhausted his social resources reinforced by a great happiness in amusing Euphemia, who was in a very undivertible ill humor, because one of her trunks could not be locked. Moreover, Mrs. Norman, to whom I had long ago given a tent to herself, had asked that she might be left alone this last evening. She had in fact so excused herself to me as her host, but Euphemia thought there would have been more propriety in her also excusing herself to the older woman. Why, did not appear to me. In fact, as Heath said later in high good humor and in the confidence of the cigar hour, Cousin Euphemia was at times so ingeniously cross that it became amusing. When after dinner she made the novel declaration that tobacco was unendurable, Heath followed her to her tent.

He came back laughing, "I told her of my engagement. She hoped it would prove satisfactory. Really, John, she said so, and why had I not told her before? She supposed that of course I had told you

at once. Don't ask me how I got out of that, but I did. Just now she is in a measure reassured. When Euphemia is about to travel, the last day she becomes intolerable."

"Yes, that is true. I suppose we all have our minutes of discontent. I have, Harry."

Then he gave me one of the surprises he rarely presents me with. "John Sherwood, this month in camp with you has been one varied lesson to me in the possibilities of what a man may do with himself. You try to hide what you have done here for these desolate coast people, these poor devils, the dead man, and your generous recognition of an act of courage. No—don't stop me. I always defended you when men said you were a hard master."

"I was."

"Well, it may be so. God sent you one of those chances, if you like, one of those choices, which He offers to men. It has been in its results a lesson to me. Oh, wait a little. If you could hear what our poor Mrs. Norman says of your tact and kindness—"

"Nonsense!"

"It is not nonsense. I go home, John, with a feeling the stronger for my new happiness, and feeling that you have set me an example of what a man may do to make himself more the man he has not been." He rose, set a hand on each of my shoulders and said gravely, "I thank you for this justification of my friend. You have found yourself. Good night, John Sherwood." He was gone.

I sat down, much moved. He was a reticent man, credited with a rather cold manner, and even to me had never before been so frankly affectionate in his language. Like most men of our time of life, intent on the varied business that occupied him and me, such personal talk had been rare and brief.

I sat still thinking back over my life. Was I so radically changed? Are there many ways of being born again? And the woman—I was pleased to think that she had gratefully recognized services so pleasant to render and I knew that I should miss her. It was near to eleven when Dodo brought me a note, Mrs. Norman had given him for me. He had put it down somewhere and forgotten it. It said:

Dear Mr. Sherwood:

I find it easier to write than to say what I want done. My thanks you have, but there are two other matters with which I must trouble you. I wish a simple stone with the name and date set over Mr. Norman's grave. Kindly have this done for me and let me know from someone my material debt.

I feel that I must write for your eye alone what I lacked courage to say fully and which yet, in defense of my womanhood, I must somehow deal with.

I must have seemed to you singularly unaffected by the horrible tragedy of this summer. I was not crushed by it. I was not even capable of appearing to be that which I was not. A woman who for a year has lived in the belief that any night might bring death has exhausted her power to fear and, too, her resources of sorrow. There must be for the strong a reason for tears. I falter here

and see that I can write no more. I did mean to explain to the master of the tent whose salt I have eaten what I find I cannot. Just here is indeed where courage to write freely of my own past life is quite beyond my power. I meant to do it and can not—perhaps ought not—or knowing you, need not.

Please to burn this incoherent letter and believe me,

Always very gratefully yours,

HELEN NORMAN.

P. S. I sent home long ago the official proofs of Mr. Norman's death you were so kind as to procure for me. His will I have seen and now the papers will enable me at once to settle his affairs and fulfill an intention long considered. H. N.

Seated in my tent late in the night, I read this letter several times. I felt that now I knew or too fully realized what a year of constant nearness to death might mean. I had heard from Heath how few men or women will steadily abide by this pledge of "till death us do part."

I suspected that Helen Norman had made a marriage in which the passions had no share. I could read between the lines that duty, not love, made her enduringly face death and resolutely search for the man whom she knew to be so dangerous. I was reminded of Cairns' desire to explain the motives which made him risk his life to save Hapworth. I wrote:

Dear Mrs. Norman:

Be at ease about us. You are in no danger of being in any way misunderstood. It was a real pleasure to have

been able to be of any use to you. I hope in happier days to renew an acquaintance which has given me at least one good thing, the chance to see and know you.

If any further evidence of the death of Mr. Norman be needed, you must say to your legal adviser that I am at your service. I will attend to the other matter. I understand that Mrs. Christian and Cairns are to use Mr. Norman's books and furniture as they please. That is well and kind.

Heartily at your service, I am very sincerely yours,

JOHN SHERWOOD.

All our good neighbors were on the beach at ten the next morning, Tom Dagett, the Christians and Cairns. As I, the last, went down the rocks with Mrs. Christian to a rather silent group already gathered on the shore, she said, "Seems to me they 're right sorry to go, sir. Mrs. Norman, she 's about the most cheery of them. She has given all her husband's things away to Bob and me. There was n't much, except chairs, tables and books. We just shut up the house and left it. When I asked her what she wanted to keep, she said, 'Nothing, nothing at all.' I guess she 'd like to give away some of the things she remembers."

"No doubt," I said, "that would be a privilege."

"Can't give away that kind of property, can you?"

"No. But they are waiting for us."

Mrs. Norman shook hands with those she left with a kindly word to each and soon they were out at sea. My neighbors went to their homes, and I was left alone at the close of a too memorable summer.

XIV

WHEN they had gone I busied myself about the camp or took to my exercise with an axe, cutting firewood, for now the September nights were cold and a camp fire pleasant at times.

It was near eleven when I closed my diary of the day and sat down to let my mind wander over the last two months. A large silence was on land and sea. It is the hour of self-confession. Yes, it were vain to deny that for the first time a woman interested me as none had ever done. With my capacity to vizualize things once seen, I saw the child-like, innocent look of blue eyes that seemed without record of disaster. The virginal curves of her slight figure I saw and recalled the sense her presence gave me of flowerlike delicacy and appealing freshness. I thought of the amazing courage of dutiful months unsustained by sacrificial love. Good Heavens! Never once had she spoken of her husband otherwise than as Mr. Norman. I had no least indecision as to this matter. Time must pass, much time, before I could speak to her of the thought never more to be long out of my mind, but ah, this waiting on time and its chances!

I had settled that I would not run the risks of city

life, and the winter loneliness of a camp I could not face. I wanted, as never before, larger human intercourse. To be near Helen Norman now, to see her with apparent mere friendliness, was not possible. I should have shocked her with betrayals of the love of an age which had too, the impatience of a man accustomed to go straight to his purpose; I would take Dodo and go West and then around the world.

A letter from her two weeks later, about October 7, still further added knowledge of her character.

Dear Mr. Sherwood:

Someone has said that we remember better the pleasures of life than its pain. Certainly much of the sad past you know of seems to me like the fading memory of an evil dream, while the healing wonder of sea and wood is recalled with grateful clearness.

Miss Euphemia writes to me much disturbed by what I have done on my return in regard to Mr. Norman's property, all of which he left to me by a will made soon after our marriage. She can not comprehend my motives as you, I am hopefully sure, will do when I tell you that I have given his whole estate to his two aunts, old maiden ladies, with narrow means. An earthquake could not have surprised them more. They have always been far from friendly, but I was amused that they seemed to feel indignant at my desire to retain nothing that had belonged to Mr. Norman's family. They were bound to express gratitude, of course. They expressed it in rather unusual forms; but really human nature is very interesting.

My lawyer was hard to convince that I was in earnest. My friends are the more amazed because I will not explain

why I am doing so mad a thing. I did what I had to do and if it is considered eccentric, I continue to feel no need and surely no desire to defend my action. Only Lucy Howard, who knows what my life has been, had the kind insight which needed no explanation. I simply could not keep that money.

I certainly should not have ventured to write to you of this matter, were it not that it excites much comment and that you may hear of it from others. And so the guest you have probably by this time ceased to remember as other than one to whom you were the good Samaritan prefers to tell her own story. Miss Euphemia is sure to criticize my action and is certain to write of it to you.

I must for a time fly from my friends and go abroad, and please not to think me eccentric. I never did a more merely commonsense thing than what I am now blamed for.

I have so set before Miss Swanwick the charm of a winter in Rome that she has at last yielded to my desire, and we sail October 10, to be gone at least a year. This will surprise you. A friend of a near friend of yours, says I write zigzaggy letters. You will pardon me, but I think I have said what I wished to say.

Ever thankfully yours,

HELEN NORMAN.

I am by no means beggared and with her income and mine we shall do very well.

I sat down that evening to thank Mrs. Norman for the desire she expressed that I should not misunderstand the unusual act which so excited my cousin. For the first time in my life I felt the need to set some guard on my words. The letter I sent at last

was so formal that although regretting its stiffness and the feeling that its reserve was almost discourteous, I could not venture to better it.

By the same mail I heard from Euphemia.

Dear John:

Helen Norman is here with me for a day or two in order to arrange this business of going to Europe. I am preparing my mind for it with some difficulty. I could not have yielded to Helen's wish if I had not felt that it was a duty, a religious duty, to take this wounded soul into the spiritual atmosphere of Rome. There I trust she will secure that true peace and resignation which I am sure she needs, but of which she shows no outward evidence. If she were not now so pretty and so unexpectedly attractive to men, I should have more hope that she would turn whither alone consolation is assured, in the bosom of *the Church.*

Harry Heath would be delighted with these Euphemial views on good looks as obstacles to piety.

I was too late to avert an act of incomprehensible folly, in her turning over all of her husband's fortune to his two old maiden aunts. She should have felt that it was the only reparation he could make her. Could not something be done to convince these women, his aunts, that they had acted with undue haste in accepting her gift?

"Oh, Euphemia!" I gasped. "Are for you things done and ended never done?"

I read on,

She laughed, John, like a child, when I wanted her to reopen the matter. Is it really hopeless?

There was more of it, and where was I going? Could not I join them in Rome, etc. I replied that I had other plans and, making no comment on Mrs. Norman's letter, sent my cousin an ample cheque to make things easier when in Europe.

Mrs. Norman had gone back to Baltimore, when, after a few days at home with Euphemia, Dodo and I left for San Francisco. I could have done no better thing. Of my unlooked-for pleasure in this tour, I say nothing. Euphemia wrote of great happiness in Italy, but I had rare and only formal answers from Helen Norman, to whom I wrote now and then impersonal letters of what I saw in travel. She seemed to me to be getting further and further from the intimacies of our camp life. It puzzled me more than it would have done a man versed in the ways of women. Now and then she sent me a pleasant message in Euphemia's more frequent letters.

A year and a half went by and, returning late in May, I learned from Euphemia's letters that they would be at home early in July. Mrs. Norman was to be for a few days with Euphemia before they fled from the heat of the city. I would see them and be able to settle them in some seaside cottage if they were so minded. I meant then to do, I knew not what, certainly to be much with Helen Norman, concerning whom I felt a new timidity quite foreign to my usual mood when about to approach any of the difficulties of life.

I had been gone some eighteen months and as several weeks must go by before their return, I resolved, to Dodo's satisfaction, to spend the interval in Camp Retreat. I little knew what problems awaited me. No schoolboy could have more joyously returned home. I had had enough of travel, and now to lie on the rock that afternoon of my arrival with a pipe and Dodo's perfect after-dinner coffee was for the hour to ask no more of life.

A delayed letter from Euphemia found at Belport somewhat unsettled me. Euphemia wrote that they were both travel weary and had given up their contemplated tour among the "desecrated Cathedrals" of England. This change of plan would, as I saw from the date, bring them back before the letter I read reached me in my camp. It was by no means bad news and might take me home again long before I had meant to return.

I was just trying to recall the lines—The Evening Star with growing splendor mocked the dying Sun and heralded the gathering host of heaven—when, hearing a footfall, I turned from the sea and saw Mrs. Christian as she said, "Now this is right nice to see you here again." Thus, ignorant of what they carry, the postman of fate comes upon us.

I said, "Take a seat. Will you have coffee?"

"No, indeed. I don't want to keep company with Caressa Christian all night. I get enough of her by day."

"Tea, then? Tea, Dodo."

"Well, that 's better. I 'm a grandmother. Had to run to tell you—a boy—John Sherwood Cairns."

"Indeed, and is all well? I am much honored."

"Oh, the baby is that, sir. There 's another thing. It 's not as important as the baby. Is n't it dreadful the way people lose their importance after they quit being babies?"

I agreed to this obvious statement—"and what is the other thing?"

"Oh, when Mrs. Norman was going away—why, that 's nigh along to two years—she told me all the furniture in her husband's cabin was to be for Cairns and Susan. Some of it was right nice, like brass firedogs and silver-plated candle sticks Mr. Norman found in Belport. When we were to move things I came on a tin box of papers. I did n't look at them, that being none of my business."

"Certainly not. You were quite right. Some more tea, Dodo. What did you do?" I was becoming mildly interested.

"Susan, she said, 'Just burn up the papers. Mrs. Norman would be glad never to hear of that poor man's belongings.' It was true, Mr. Sherwood, she did say to me, 'Burn what you don't want.' She wouldn't say another word, but just, 'I don't want anything.' "

"Well, of course you kept the box?"

"Yes. I was much of Susan's mind, but men somehow feel to keep papers like they was sacred things, and Peter said, 'Send that box to Mrs. Nor-

man.' How could I and she in Europe. Cairns advised to keep it till she got back and now here you are, and I just fetched the box for you to send it. It 's in your tent."

I did not much fancy the business thus put in my care and was for a moment silent when Mrs. Christian said, "You don't like it now, me neither. She 'll hate it."

"I do not like it but I will think what is best to be done."

"Well, it 's relieving to have you look after it."

"I will. How are Cairns and Peter?"

"They 're all right, and the mill 's making money. I forgot to tell you we found a miniature of Mrs. Norman. It was n't in the box but just lying on the table. You 'd hardly know it for her the way she looked when she was here. I left it on top of the box. Bob Cairns will be here to see you to-morrow. Got to go. Good-bye."

She went away and the last peace of many days fell on my untroubled soul.

Late in the night, I laid aside a lightly considered book and remembered the tin box and miniature. The miniature lay on the box. This, at least, I might look at. It was in an open gold setting and on the back was engraved on the mounting, "Helen Maynard, Æt. 25, Florence." It was not Helen Norman and that I liked. I sat still looking through the open tent at the leaping white caps on the dark ocean. Something, as I studied the young face, something

like vague jealousy of the dead man, came over me. Oh, to have known her earlier: and then came the honest thought that it was not only her personal charm which won my sudden love, but also her courage and high-minded conduct in the face of constant peril, the sense of duty with which another duty had burdened her.

"No," I murmured, "you never loved that man. You were always Helen Maynard."

I was to decide what to do with the box. I was clear as to what to do, but not how to do it. I, of course, could not look at the dead man's papers; only Helen Norman could do that. With every instinct of love in revolt, I was averse to asking Mrs. Norman directly what she wished done with this box. I resolved at last to write to Euphemia and eager to be done with it, I wrote at once.

Dear Cousin:

Among Mr. Norman's effects Mrs. Christian found a tin box of papers which she kept until Mrs. Norman's return. Not knowing what to do with it she brings it to me. Mrs. Christian says it contains papers which she did not read. Of course I do not. Will you ask Mrs. Norman what I am to do with it. It is an unpleasant business for her, a material resurrection of a miserable past.

Yours always,

JOHN SHERWOOD.

Camp Retreat, June ...?

On the fifth day I heard in reply.

Dear John:

Helen is here for a fortnight. The Atlantic was at its wicked worst and we are glad of a rest. When I asked Helen what you were to do with the box of papers, she showed an amount of emotion which amazed me. I never supposed she cared for that man enough to be moved by a thing like this. She was pretty near a fit of hysterics when I said, "Control yourself, my dear child."

She broke out of a sudden with, "Tell Mr. Sherwood to open the box. If there are any things I must see, then I must. Tell him he is at liberty to read whatever there is, at full liberty. Ask him to burn what is of no value. I never want to hear of it again."

"But," I said, "would it not be better to have him send you the box?"

She cried out, "No, No. This ends it. I hope to hear no more of it. Tell him what I say. He will understand. No one else understands me." What she meant by this, I do not know. I felt hurt. She got up and left the room. That is all. I did hope she had forgotten that wretched man. It seems not.

Yours always,

EUPHEMIA SWANWICK.

I was thus not only set at liberty to learn the contents of the box I had set on the table beside me, but knew that I was desired to save her a task she was not willing to undertake.

And so "I alone understood her."

The confidence reposed in a man of whom she had seen so little touched me. It would have been for her a miserable business; for me it was of itself of small moment.

I laid down my pipe and opened the box. It was, as one might have expected, full of a tumbled mass of paid bills, a few insane verses such as I had found at the spring, some even better, some very wild, a half-finished sermon and a diary with no entries. I found also a cheque book with a credit of two thousand dollars on the county bank. Then I came on a revolver and felt glad indeed that Helen Norman had not had the courage to examine these papers. I walked to the cliff and threw the weapon far out into the sea.

When I returned to my tent and the box, I discovered little else than a package of garden seeds and what seemed to be memoranda of sales of stocks.

The last paper, now the only one left, was a blank envelope not sealed.

I was startled as I unfolded the sheet of paper thus covered. It was a holograph will, that is all of it was in Norman's writing, dated, as I saw below, about four months after he had come to live on my land. As I turned to the top of the sheet to read it, I had a prevision of disaster. It ran thus:—

I, Benedict Norman, being of sound mind and disposing capacity, do give and bequeath to my aunts, Sarah Wilson and Harriet Wilson, two hundred thousand dollars to be between them equally divided. Also I give the residue of my estate, fifty thousand dollars more or less, to the Baltimore City Hospital in loving memory of my mother, Lucy Elwood Norman.

I believe my wife, Helen Norman, to have been rightly sent to the bar of God's justice by my hand. But as I am

at times in doubt as concerns her having survived, I here solemnly state that she has not been remembered in this my will because I have proof that she was unfaithful to her marriage vows. That I be not misjudged of men, I name as her partner in guilt Henry Heath, a doctor of medicine.

BENEDICT NORMAN.

May seventh, 1889.

There were no witnesses.

I fell back in my chair appalled. Here again was the delusion out of which arose the desire to kill Heath and his wife. He was under the despotic power of a belief which drove him to take the primitive man's vengeance for the ultimate human wrong. What a legacy of enduring revenge he had left in case of his death.

I read it again. The whole picture of the man's tormented nature was here, the belief that he had murdered, the recurrent belief that he had not, the legacy of hate,—a wretched business. Had he forgotten this will as time ran on and that made soon after his marriage? Had he meant to burn this last will when unluckily Dodo had saved it? Who could say? At all events, here it was to arouse new questions. This delusion must have begun soon after their marriage. I recalled what Heath had said of his correspondence with her and of Norman's abrupt letter. Then I took myself in hand and forced myself coldly to consider the will and the serious needs which it

suggested. More and more the horrible nature of the business thrown on my hands troubled me.

At last I rose and moved mechanically until I stood on the rock, that fateful paper in my hand. I alone knew of it. I alone would ever know. What if I tore this slander to pieces and let it fall into the murmuring sea below me, the confidant of so many tragic secrets since time began? What saving respect was due to a dead man's will, venomous with this cruel charge of adultery? My God! This pure, childlike woman, so gentle and so brave! The man, my friend, as clean and upright a nature as earth affords, sensitive to the least slur upon his honor and now for a year married to a woman of the best!

What ought I to do? I was in the very agony of a temptation intensified by love. I looked up to heaven in dumb appeal. Prayer, lost to me since youth, had become of late a habit. The woods and the sea, the counsels of renewed health had spoken and I had not heard in vain. I stood still in the darkness, praying to be guided.

As I rose, Mike's cool nose touched my hand. He had been left far away at the mill and had found his way back to his master. He did not, as usual, bark joyously, but looked up in wonder at my failure to welcome his return. He followed me to the tent, where I sat down and reread that accursed paper. I caressed the dog carelessly as he set his paws on my knees.

"Ah, Mike, what shall I do? I can not burn it. Must it be allowed to become public property and leave on two stainless lives the horror of newspaper comments? Alas!"

To discuss it aloud with this speechless confessor seemed to clear my head and set aside the tempting counsels of affection and friendship. Mike whined.

"Yes, I do not know, old fellow. You see she has given away all that money, all; but there is the hospital. I will not tell Harry Heath until I am obliged to do so. She must see this will. I, horrible thought, must show it to her, all of it; no other course is to be considered as possible."

Mike whined and barked. I put him aside with an impatient word. He looked up at me, reproach in his gold-irised eyes. Was this my welcome after so long an absence? At the end of his patience, he resorted to his final customary means of attracting notice. He went to the corner of the tent and did all the tricks Dodo had taught him, stood on his head, played dead, and walked on his hind legs. I called him.

"Mike," I said, "you at least have no cares. She must know it all. O God, help her and me. Ah, the dear gallant lady, so tender, alas, and so brave."

I had decided. I dropped on the floor and rolled over in a joyful tussle with Mike, laughing, yes, laughing, strangely relieved by my decision.

Then I went out again and won fresh serenity of mind as I looked up at the stars and felt that He,

who set and kept them in their mighty paths, would find for me and the woman I loved a way to do the right thing. I went to bed and slept a dreamless sleep.

I awakened, thinking what I should say to her, how approach it. The hour and her face should counsel me. I set it aside and told Dodo that I was called home and must shortly leave. Except the miniature, the will and the bank book, I burned all of Norman's papers.

I was in haste to get done with a question to which, so far, I had no answer. I told Dodo to hurry things and left with Christian the care of the camp.

"Anything the matter, sir?" asked Dodo. "Miss 'Phemy got home?"

"Yes. I must be at Belport by noon to-morrow. What the deuce amuses you?" He was showing his white teeth in a broad grin.

"Nothing, sir."

"Then you are easily amused."

"Yes, sir."

Cairns came over later and discussed the mill and the baby. In the afternoon to fill an hour with other thought, I called Mike and strolled up the beach, enjoying his continuous feud with the waves. He was wildly leaping forward when they fell back and growling in retreat before their return. At last, there was Dagett, as usual, repairing lobster traps.

"Well," he cried, "it 's good to see you again." As always he fell to talk of the sea. "Them lobster

pots do get wracked mighty easy. It 's awful tryin' to my soul. I get impatient with the Lord's doin's with the pots and nets."

"There are worse things to deal with in this life, harder to mend."

"Not for folks like you, sir. It 's just to pay and someone else attends to the business."

"Money won't doctor all our hurts, Tom."

"No, sir, but there 's God; and time 's awful helpful. Not even prayer will mend my nets. I hope you ain't in any trouble. There 's them on these coasts would be sorry." Then he added, with his usual frankness, "What 's happened?"

"Nothing I care to talk about."

"When talkin' to people don't help things, talkin' to God does. You never can tell what He 'll say or do. Prayin' ain't so immediate helpful as some folks expect, but when a man gets up off his knees and feels to be better, his prayer 's a kind of answered."

We were of one mind, this lonely fisherman with his material difficulties and I with my larger problems. I said, "Yes, yes," in a thoughtful way and shifted a too intimate talk on to other matters, glad to speak of Cairns and the coast people.

"How is Mrs. Norman?" he asked.

"Oh, well. Very well."

"She 's young, and time 's a good friend, and it was n't as bad as if he had lived."

"Yes," I said, "it was for her and for him merciful."

"It was queer, too," remarked Tom. "Now, was n't it queer? That man was kind of religious. Seemed like he was two or three people."

"I am," I said, laughing.

"Well, sir, hope you 'll hold on to the man I 've knowed you for. I 've had some experience in the ways of females. Mrs. Norman, she 'll get a better man some day."

I turned to go, saying, "I hope so."

"Some man like you," said Tom.

"Oh, stuff and nonsense!"

"Her man was what we folks call a simple, had n't no horse sense. Bible says, 'The Lord preserveth the simple' and one way is death. That 's mighty preservin'."

Amused at his queer statement of the ways of Providence, I strolled back to camp, thinking of Helen Norman.

XV

ON my homeward journey I reconsidered the questions put to me by conscience, duty and affection. I found no other answer than I had found in camp.

I was still troubled and without any happier decision when I stood on the familiar doorstep of the little house in Pine Street and hesitated a moment before I rang the bell. There was a hearty welcome from my grey-headed nurse, and I found Euphemia as usual in the little drawing-room, what we still called the parlor, hemming handkerchiefs as of old. Her stay abroad had been of service, and I could say with truth that she seemed to have dropped off some years.

When, at last, she wondered why I had left my cool camp to welcome an old woman, I was well aware that she was becoming curious. I made haste to multiply reasons for my return, and mentioned in a casual way that I had found among Norman's effects some business papers requiring consideration by Mrs. Norman, and perhaps legal advice. She was at once interested.

"John," she said, "I hope it concerns her folly in

giving Norman's property away — no one knows why."

"It does not," I replied; "that is an affair of nearly two years ago. It is dead and buried."

"Yes, yes, I suppose so. But to think of it, John, and she will not give any reason."

Euphemia, who gave lavishly to charities and her church, had in her youth suffered so much from poverty that money, property in bulk, assumed for her values which had clearly no such place in the nature of Helen Norman, nor had the younger woman been at pains to defend her unworldly action.

"She is sometimes very disappointing," continued my cousin sadly. "I did not find, John, that she found in Rome what I did. Perhaps she may have been there with her husband."

"Possibly," said I, hating the discussion, all of it, "possibly."

"Oh, probably," returned Euphemia. "She was now and then depressed, far more than at the time of her husband's death. I always said her sorrow would deepen with time. Sometimes I fancied that it was regret at her foolishness in depriving herself of property in such a hasty way. At first, long ago, I did think something might be done about it. I spoke to you then of it."

"You did," I said curtly. "I thought we were done with it. Why bring it up again? It is neither your business nor mine."

"But it is most lamentable, John, most lamentable."

I was so well acquainted with my cousin's ways that now as she spoke I had an unpleasant suspicion that she had at some time been more immediately meddling with Mrs. Norman's affairs. I said sharply, "Euphemia, have you been at any time interfering in this business?"

"No, I have not, John." Then she hesitated and added, "Not directly."

"How then? How indirectly?"

"Only by a letter, but not lately."

"Not really! You don't mean you wrote to her husband's aunts!"

"I did, but it was such a short letter."

"You are really inconceivable. And pray, what did you say?"

"Oh, I kept a copy. You know, John, how accurate I am in matters of business." A more hopelessly inaccurate person I never knew.

"Let me see that letter, your copy."

She hesitated, and then said, "I will, I will, but it was really long ago."

"Let me see it now. I will wait. Let me see it." I was vexed and anxious. Well might Heath say that she had a moderate amount of intellect, but neither intelligence nor common sense.

She left me and in a few minutes returned.

"I can't find it," she said. "I have mislaid it." I was certain that she was fibbing. "Perhaps to-

morrow, John." I was sure never to see that letter.

I asked, "Did Mrs. Norman know of your interference?"

"Of course not, but—"

"Well, no matter. Did you get an answer?"

"I did, most discourteous, most unpleasant. You will sympathize with me. Here it is."

Here it was, indeed, with a date of over a year ago.

Madam:

The young woman who made our nephew's life so miserable has seen fit to return to his family the property which he left to her before he came to understand her true character. We are indisposed to dwell upon the matter—what you have to do with it we cannot conceive.

SARAH AND HARRIET WILSON.

I was troubled. Did these old fools believe his delusions as to his wife's dishonor? How freely had he talked, and then had he named Heath?

"Oh, Euphemia," I exclaimed, "how could you!"

"But, John, it was ever so long ago."

I put the letter in my pocket, meaning to destroy it, sure now that in no way must these women be brought personally into the case.

"John, give me that letter."

"No. You may have again made mischief. I shall burn it. Once before you came near to costing her life. You should have let alone what was none of your business."

"But I want Helen to see it. I want her to feel that I—"

"Euphemia, if you ever speak of it to her, I shall never forgive you. Promise me."

"I do, I do, but I am quite unable to see how it concerns you."

"It does, Euphemia, but I will not discuss it further. Promise me."

"Helen should have consulted me, oh—or someone. But I promise!" and for a wonder she kept her word, or at least that is my belief.

"Is Mrs. Norman in?" I asked. "I must see her about these papers and about a little balance Norman left in the bank at Belport."

"Yes, she is in. I will call her. You won't mention it to her, John, about my letter, I mean."

"Hardly."

Left alone, I reflected that under no circumstances must there be any appeal to the aunts concerning the hospital. It should be, must be, discussed by us, but with no reference to this letter or its implications. So far, Euphemia's meddling had had its value.

Then Helen Norman entered, another Helen! She came swiftly from the back room, radiant, giving me both hands of frank welcome.

"Euphemia said you would come. But why in this maddening heat should you leave that cool camp to come and visit us? I told Euphemia, when she said you would be sure to come at once to see her, that she was a brevet mother and expected too much of men.

She keeps the spillikins you made and I think puts them next in value to a precious relic of one of her many saints. I love her too well to make merry over the comic corners of her religion."

Mrs. Norman was talking fast, a little disconnectedly, but showing no embarrassment before a man who had met her last in the forced intimacies of an unusual and painful situation.

"You are right, but I have no doubt that the ways —what you call the corners—of any, perhaps of every, sect may have their amusing aspects for the outsiders of other creeds. There is Mrs. Christian and Tom Dagett."

"Yes, that quaintly wise creature, and Mike who believes in one divinity, John Sherwood. How is Mike, the golden-eyed Mike?"

"Oh, well," I said. "Very well." I was recalled by his name to the remembrance of that last night in camp and its bewildering problems.

Mrs. Norman's eyes, those childlike blue eyes of appeal, troubled me. "I hope that Susan is well and Cairns."

"Yes, all is as one could desire and there is a small John Sherwood Cairns. I believe that you are to be the godmother or some Baptist substitute for such an office."

Then she said, smiling, "It will be at a distance. What else is there?" Ah, these intuitive perceptions of women. "There is something else?"

"Yes, there is."

"Then tell me. You look grave. What is it? Nothing can happen to trouble me now. I have exhausted the possible calamities of life. There is something over which you hesitate. Once I said to you I was not a woman to be prepared, as people say, for bad news. What is it?"

"Mrs. Norman, it is you and you alone who brought me here. Among Mr. Norman's effects was a tin box full of unimportant papers which Mrs. Christian, with her good sense, did not read, but thought I might be a proper person to consider, or you if I thought best. I asked Euphemia to—to tell you and give you a choice—"

"Thank you. I am sure you understood me. I sent you word. But there is something you hesitate to tell me?"

"Yes. Among these papers I found a holograph will, that is, a will all in Mr. Norman's handwriting." She listened intent. "It is dated some months after he settled on my land. At whatever pain it may cost, you must see it. Then as—as your friend, we must consider what is to be done. There are questions I could not decide without you."

"Give it to me."

I did. She read the first paragraph and looked up. "But it is all left to his aunts. Why, they have the money now."

"Go on," I said.

"Ah, the hospital. That is serious, but—" and she paused, "there is a way."

"Go on," I said. She read the brutal charge at the close. "Oh, my God!" she cried. The paper fell to the floor. She grew deathly pale and then flushing scarlet, said a characteristic thing, "Poor Dr. Heath, and my dear Lucy Howard!" Not a word of herself.

"They at least will never know," I said, as I picked up the will. "They never shall know. I would have saved you too this horror had it been possible. I saw no way to save you. But remember that I, your friend, put at your service all of resolution, courage and resource I have—with such power as wealth can give. Let us consider what is to be done. One courage I lacked. I wanted to burn this will."

"No," she said, "a dead man's will. You were right. You, at least, should not. But, what is to be done? What *is* to be done?"

"I have learned that a holograph will, dated, without witnesses, is good to-day in Maryland. If we turned this over to probate, its validity would depend on proof of the writer having been of sound mind when he wrote it, and the gifts made, taken alone, are sane enough? Would the aunts give the hospital that fifty thousand dollars?"

I was now sure they would not, but felt I must let the matter be discussed naturally. "These women could reasonably be asked to give it as a memorial, but you would have to explain yourself by showing this paper. Would that be wise?"

"No, neither wise nor of any use. The condition

of their minds is very strange. I mean about what I gave. They were blindly devoted to Mr. Norman and were furious when my legal adviser and I and my friends put him in an asylum. They took his money, but talked of it as an insult to the memory of a man I had ill treated and as the gift of a remorseful woman. Can you imagine that? They would do nothing about the hospital unless they saw the will. And even then if they did see it they would be sure to believe this awful charge and talk. I know them far too well. If the will were to be made public, they would fight it bitterly."

"Yes," I said; "if you are right about them they would stand on the first will and on your ownership and resist the claim of the hospital that he was at the time of this later will sane."

"But suppose, Mr. Sherwood, I myself quietly gave this sum to the hospital. The intention of the will would thus be practically fulfilled, after which I would—"

"Pardon me, but what would you have left?"

"About twenty-five thousand dollars. That is of no moment. I want to defend your friend and mine, Lucy Howard. Money, what is money? It is nothing. If this will went into the courts and was discussed by the newspapers, I should die of shame. How too could he be proved to have been at this later date insane and would even proof of his insanity help your friend or me? There always would be this cruel charge."

This was true. "For you," I said, "to send this money to the hospital as an anonymous gift merely to get out of an unendurable position would not help you. There would still be the will which meant it to be a loving memorial for his mother. Would you give it in that form?"

"No, I could not. I would not. I do not want to in that form. Oh, it is dreadful!"

"Let me think it over. No one knows of this but you and me. I will see you to-morrow, no, in two days. You must wait patiently."

"It is long to wait."

I put the will in my pocket, she saying as I rose, "Mr. Sherwood, I leave this to you. I am sure you will find a way for me to do what is right. Thank you. Come early, at ten in the morning. I shall try to be patient. Euphemia will be out at that hour."

I went back to the apartments I had kept throughout my long absences. I dressed, dined with Heath and his wife and was resolute that they should never know of this will. That night I sat down alone to think over this difficult situation.

If the conditions of an insane man's testament could be fulfilled without obedience to the legal forms, did the moral law of good citizenship demand such strictness of conduct as would result in the publicity of the courts and the publication of one of those slanders which have such vitality of evil. I did not mean it should be. Then I saw a way. I was as usual decisive and readily arranged matters to my

own satisfaction, whether to hers or not I was yet to learn.

"Euphemia is in," said Mrs. Norman, as we sat down, "but I told her you had undertaken to settle for me some business matters."

"Did this satisfy her?"

"No, it did not," and I was glad that she could smile, "but you know her. Now you have been thinking, I trust to some purpose. I too, have been thinking all night and to no purpose. I got this far. I am a woman alone in the world, without any near kindred to feel and suffer. If I alone were involved, I would boldly face this matter and let this last will be fought over by two greedy old women and the hospital. Let me see it again."

She read it with quiet attention and laid it aside on a table.

"No, I can not. It gets worse the more I think of it. If I had found this will, I would have burned it, but now you have seen it. It carries for you certain responsibilities which I have to consider. To give it to me would be to destroy it. Oh, I have thought about it," she continued, "and that unhappily you too are to be considered. Ah, if I had been less of a coward and had had that box sent to me, neither you nor anyone else would have seen this slander."

She spoke more and more rapidly as she went on, evidently under the control of almost overmastering emotion. "But now is your friend and mine to be

cursed in the dearest days of life by an insane man's action, and would it be looked upon by everyone as only the product of a sick mind? It is too devilish. Was ever such a calamity!" She paused.

"Mr. Sherwood, you must excuse me. I had come to think that nothing worse could happen to me than what I had been able to bear with courage, but this —this—! You said you were my friend. You said you would think about it—"

It was time that she ceased to set free emotion in speech. Even with my small knowledge of women it was plain to me that she was near to some physical disaster. As she ceased to speak, she looked up at me with those troubled, overfull eyes of childlike appeal.

I said, as quietly as possible, "Mrs. Norman, I have, as I promised, given this matter all the thought it requires. But before I tell you my conclusions I want once more to know what you can do or cannot. My own embarrassment as to this paper was—is in my sense of duty to the law. I am now considering this thing, as you must, calmly. What can you do?"

She was more quiet, more thoughtful and was intently listening.

"These aunts," I said, further, "have already what he meant to give?"

"Yes, but go on."

"You assured me that you could not give to the hospital as Mr. Norman's memorial, the amount the will leaves. You said I would understand why you

could not. I was not quite clear as to your meaning."

"I could give—but not in the terms his will desires."

"But that would not fulfill the wish of a loving memorial to his mother. Whatever is sane about this will has got to be respected by you and by me."

"That is plain, Mr. Sherwood. I have tried to feel that way."

"You said I would understand."

"Yes, about the hospital gift."

"But really, as I have just told you, I am not clear that I do."

"Why, Mr. Sherwood, I might give merely to get rid of the last fragment of a doubt about my right to destroy an insane man's will."

"I see, and burn it then?"

"Yes, and without a scruple, but to refuse to retain and use his money and yet to give now of my own means as this will gives, a memorial that would seem to be given out of affection, respect, remembrance—I—do not make me say more. It would be known as my gift. I should be acting a lie. I simply cannot. Except for Lucy and Dr. Heath I would say, let them fight out this will. I said so."

She had reached the conclusion I desired. Now I did more fully understand her.

"No," I returned, "beside my cousin and your friend, there is another to be considered—you. You will need some moral courage to face what I shall

propose." I was feeling a little uneasy at my own daring.

"Courage!" she laughed, in a not pleasant way. "It is too horrible. Even to have to speak of this, this thing, this charge, to you—to you—oh, to anyone—is horrible. That alone asks courage. What do you want me to do that needs it? I have faced death, ah, many times, with a madman's pistol touching my forehead. Courage!" She started up, and walked about, twisting a handkerchief, talking wildly. "You talk of courage! I had the courage of duty. Love I never had. My friends, my doctor, said, 'Separation—divorce,' but this man; to him I had bound my best self for sickness and health. I had the courage of duty, of remembrance of his care of my father. What more courage is wanted now?"

"I will tell you presently, but pray sit down and listen."

"I will. I will. What have I been saying? You will excuse me, I know. I thought it was all gone and done with, and now—oh, my God! He lay like a curse on my young life, and now—now I am to be whipped through the years with a dead man's slander! Let me burn it. I have a right to burn it. No one shall stop me."

"Sit down, please," I repeated. She did at last throw herself on the lounge.

"You will not like what I have done. No other course was possible."

"What is it that you have done?"

"You can not, will not, give this memorial gift?"

"No, but—"

"Pardon me. I understand your indecision, but I took you at your word. It is now out of your power and mine. To-day the hospital will have the check of Maxwells, the Baltimore bankers, for fifty thousand dollars and with it a typewritten, unsigned note saying that it is a gift in loving memory of Lucy Elwood Norman, mother of the late Reverend Benedict Norman; I at least can so put it if you could not. I added that the donor desires to remain anonymous. My agents in this matter are to be trusted. No one else will know."

The little woman was on her feet as I ended. "Mr. Sherwood, you have taken a liberty which nothing in our relation justifies. I shall of course repay you. You had no right to force upon me this obligation."

"Shall I withdraw the draft?"

"You know you cannot. You leave me helpless. You would not have dared to do it for a man."

"Would I not? I would do it, oh, and more, for Heath's sake, that I might feel free to burn this accursed paper."

"Oh, Mr. Sherwood, I have said to you in my—my distress what, remembering your kindness to me in those bitter days, I should not have said. But why, oh, why did you, who are so kind, so considerate, put me in this position? Now I can do nothing. I am trapped, powerless. Why did you, a friend, take this liberty?"

I too had risen when she did. It was too much for me, who had meant to be patient and trust my future happiness to longer acquaintance and the delicacies of a yet timid love.

"Why? You ask why? Take it, then. It was because I love you. There, it is out, the story of these long months of waiting with never out of my mind for a day one woman. It was the liberty of a great honest love, the first of my life and the last. What is your answer, Helen?"

For but a moment she looked me in the face. Then she threw herself on the lounge, her head in her hands, sobbing out, "I am ashamed, ashamed. It came. It came in little self-surprises and then in a terrible hour of lonely, uncontrolled surrender. I knew, oh, I knew too well, but this— How could I guess that you—you—that you—that you loved me?"

Then I had her in my arms with wild words of love. I held her at arm's length, a hand on each shoulder, saying, "And this incredible thing has come, and you are really mine. Ah, but life owes you much. I shall pay that debt with interest. Oh, but I shall spoil you, Helen," and more and more of such glad folly of yearning love that had found at last a tongue.

It might have been five minutes—the lying clock had the face to insist it was half an hour. She had spoken hardly more than a word now and then.

I said, "Talk to me. You are silent. Oh, I remem-

ber the hour I first heard that low, sweet voice, Helen."

She laughed, "You have given me small chance. You will get enough of my tongue for, oh, John Sherwood, I have what I wanted, and I just wish to get into a corner a while, all alone, and think about how wonderful it is. Ah, the dear new toy, love. Let me run away and play with it for, oh, John, I feel so young again. You will please to go away, now, at once, and consider the foolish thing you have done. I can't talk to you, even to you, now. I should just say over and over 'I love you.'" She ended, with happy emphasis of laughter. "Please to go."

"Yes, dear."

"Euphemia will be here and I am in such a state! my hair! Do let me go."

"One word," I said, "we have forgotten that will. I will keep it until we decide what to do with it."

She had taken it from the table, and then let it fall on the floor. Now she swept down on it fiercely and cried, "Decide! What are wills, dead follies, hospitals, money, all, anybody! I have come into a fortune, John Sherwood, and there is nothing in all the world but love." Then she cried, "God bless you!" and—it is to be feared Euphemia saw it—kissed me.

"Ye saints!" said my cousin, her confounded glasses up, examining the pair of us. "So this was the business on hand! Well, well."

"Please to go away," cried Helen, "both of you. Tell him to go. Both of you go."

"Then this afternoon?"

"Yes, but go."

I went as bidden. I walked away thoughtful, along the familiar streets, past old St. Peter's Church, thinking of the blessed chance-given accident of my choice of a camp refuge. I must go and confide my story of happiness to Harry and his wife.

When we met again in the afternoon, I said, after an hour of talk over our plans, "You have that paper, Helen? I forgot it and everything but you."

"Yes, it is safe."

Then she showed me a Baltimore journal where the hospital gift was mentioned with some wondering comment, but without a word of her.

I said, "I am uneasy about that will."

"You need not be."

"Why?"

"It is burned."

"You burned it!"

"No, Sarah Koonis burned it. Those accidents will occur. I wanted to destroy some letters and there was no fire, except in the kitchen."

"As an explanation that is, well, rather dubious."

"Is it? You could not burn it."

"I always meant to and hesitated as a man may over an illegal act, the breaking of a wise law."

"Well, I have saved your conscience. My own is clear. Illegal! Law! What do I care. There is no law for me but the law of love." I said no more.

When our secret of a week was out, and Euphemia

free to relate this delightful gossip, Dodo appeared.

"Well, Dodo," said Helen Norman, "I hope you are pleased. Was it a surprise?"

"I always did know it would come about."

"Good heavens!" said the lady.

When, before this, Harry Heath came with Lucy, his wife, and roses and congratulations, I had, as he spoke, the thought of how fortunate it was that there is no human power to unlock the secret chambers of another's mind.

THE END

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